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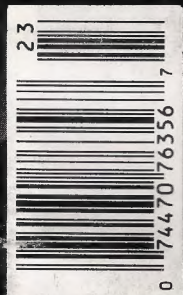


ISSUE No. 19

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The Cure the dark side

An interview with Robert Smith



Christian Death · Godflesh · Nosferatu

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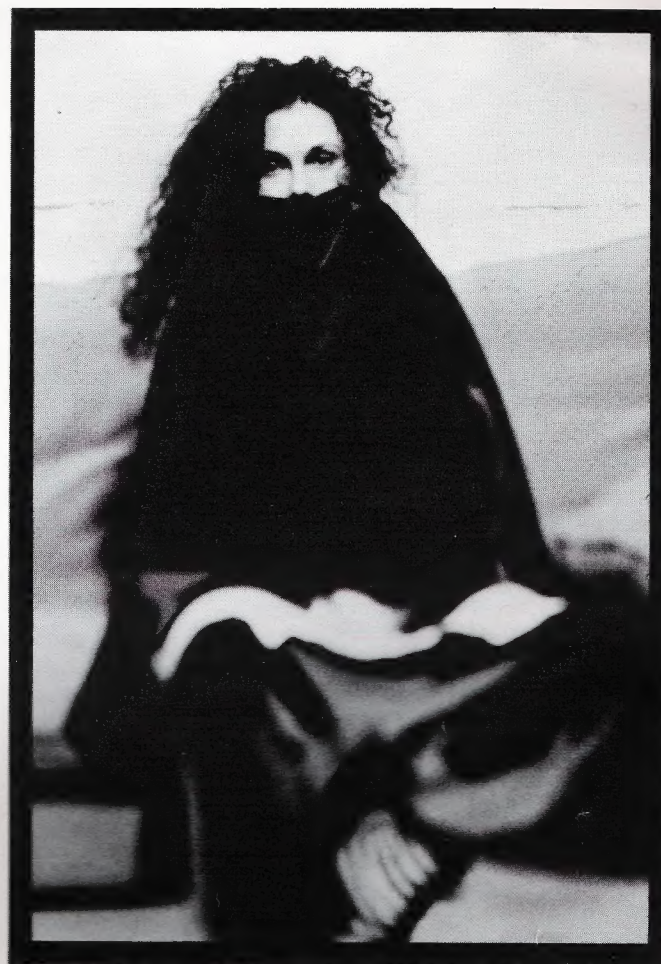
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Write for Young Gods fan club info.



Kevin Westenberg

Caroline Crawley of This Mortal Coil on page 50.

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THE CURE THE DARK AGES

Réne interviews Robert Smith

Photos by Paul Cox



"I don't care if Monday's blue, Tuesday's grey and Wednesday too / Thursday, I don't care about you / It's Friday I'm in Love."

— "Friday I'm In Love"

From the new **WISH** Lp.

Isn't it ironic that the big single off the Cure's latest album, **WISH**, is being so maligned as "too happy" and "a pop sellout" by some of the band's more ardent, death-rock supporters — and yet, four out of the five days described in the song are very gloomily depicted. This perfectly illustrates what the Cure's audience has come to expect from the agnestridden messiahs of melancholy. For so long now, Mr. Robert Smith has been the idolic mouth-piece for a legion of lost souls in black. It is now expected — no, demanded — of him that he not stray from this morbus purpose. Lord Smith would like to allay some of the concerns that have reared their ugly heads because of the "Friday I'm In Love" single.

"It's a dumb pop song, plain and simple," states Robert, plain and simple. "It's not meant to be taken seriously. In fact, I'm kind of upset that our American label was so intent on making it the first single off the album. It's really not representative of the vast majority of the material on **WISH**. It's really a lightweight song and definitely out of character for us. It was only added as a counterbalance to some of the heavier, more somber stuff like 'Trust' and 'The Edge Of The Deep Green Sea.' Even though I really had a good time recording the album, rest assured, I'm as miserable as ever."

There is good reason for Robert and his Cure to find themselves pigeonholed into the dark spot on our collective consciousness. Albums like **17 SECONDS** ('80), **FAITH** ('81), **PORNOGRAPHY** ('82), **HEAD ON THE DOOR** ('85) and **DIS-INTEGRATION** ('89) have all been universally hailed as doom n' gloom anthems to the hordes of disillusioned middle-class

youth all over the world. Robert acknowledges this position he has assumed in the pop culture theocracy, but he also sees some limitations and drawbacks to it.

"Ever since I started writing music for this band," says Robert, "I have always felt the need to let my emotions flow out into the open. This will always be an emotional band. I find it easy to write about what pours from my heart. It just so happens that much of what flows from it is down-cast — almost desperate. Music is my way of moaning, of crying, of throwing a tantrum. It's not calculated, it's how I feel at the moment. On **PORNOGRAPHY** and **DIS-INTEGRATION** I felt particularly isolated and melancholic during the writing stages — and consequently the music reflects that. On **WISH**, I felt more a part of the band. It was more a group effort, so it turned out less introspective and alienated.

"Because my very private emotions have constantly been put on display like this for so long, many of our fans have strongly identified with them. These people seem to believe that I somehow have a special insight into things — that I'm somehow able to deliver all the answers to all their problems in life. I'd really rather not be thought of in that way, which is why I included the song 'End' on the last album."

In the song "End," Robert makes a plea to his throng of anguished worshipers to put a damper on their near-hysterical idolization of him. "Please stop loving me / I am none of these things." But this request may be too little too late. After fifteen years of icon-cult status, the legend of Robert Smith has become much larger than the man Robert Smith. With a string of landmark songs to his credit, from "Killing An Arab" ('79) to "Boys Don't Cry" ('79) to "Let's Go To Bed" ('82) to "Close To Me" ('85), Robert has chiseled his profile into rock's Mount Rushmore. Few musical personalities have etched such an indelible image of themselves onto the pop culture canvas. How many forlorned teens, both male and



Robert Smith (far right) and the Cure — voices for the crying heart.

female, have styled themselves after this tousle-haired, make-up-smeared, weepy-eyed, little lost boy.

"I never planned to make a statement with how I looked," insists Robert. "A persona builds up around you after you've been on the scene for awhile. I never imagined that anyone would copy me. When we started as the Easy Cure back in '76, I had a shaved head. I've always looked different depending on how I felt. I think the image of the tousled hair and makeup stuck because me and Siouxsie were doing it at the same time at important crossroads in both our careers."

This "crossroad" was the '82-'84 period when the Banshees and the Cure crossed paths many times, and Goth was undisputed king in the British Isles. Robert still looks back at that era and the events leading up to it with great fondness.

"It's like it happened yesterday," he sighs. "I felt a special comradeship with certain bands like the Banshees and Joy Division. The first crop of punk bands [like the Sex Pistols] had faded from the scene, and a new crop came up 'round '79

and '80, who were much darker and moodier — less anarchic. Bands like Joy Division, us, Gang Of Four, Echo And The Bunnymen. The only early punk bands who survived were the ones able to make that transition, like Siouxsie And The Banshees and The Damned. I had great admiration for those bands. So when Chris [Parry, who discovered the Cure] introduced me to Steve Severin [of Siouxsie And The Banshees] at a Throbbing Gristle concert at Tottenham Court [Aug.'79], I jumped at the opportunity. Steve and I hit it off great, and he asked me if the Cure wanted to open for the Banshees on their upcoming **JOIN HANDS** tour. Naturally, I said yes. What better way to introduce our debut album [**THREE IMAGINARY BOYS**, which had just been released three months earlier]."

As fate would have it, the Banshees would split into two warring factions during that tour because of an in-store album-signing mishap. Drummer Kenny Morris and guitarist John McKay would leave the band in disgust because Siouxsie

and Steve chided them for giving out free copies of the **JOIN HANDS** album. Out of desperation, Siouxsie and Steve quickly recruited Robert to play guitar, and Budgie (Siouxsie's future husband) to play drums. Robert worked overtime playing for both bands during the remainder of the tour. The Cure then went on to record such killer, classic Goth albums as **17 SECONDS** (Apr.'80), **FAITH** (Apr.'81), and **PORNOGRAPHY** (May '82). Songs like "The Final Solution," "At Night," "The Holy Hour," "The Funeral Party," and "A Strange Day" set the standard for the gloom n' doom movement of the '80s in England.

The dreariness of the **PORNOGRAPHY** Lp was a harbinger of things to come. After all, as Robert admitted, Cure albums usually reflect his frame of mind at the time they're written and recorded.

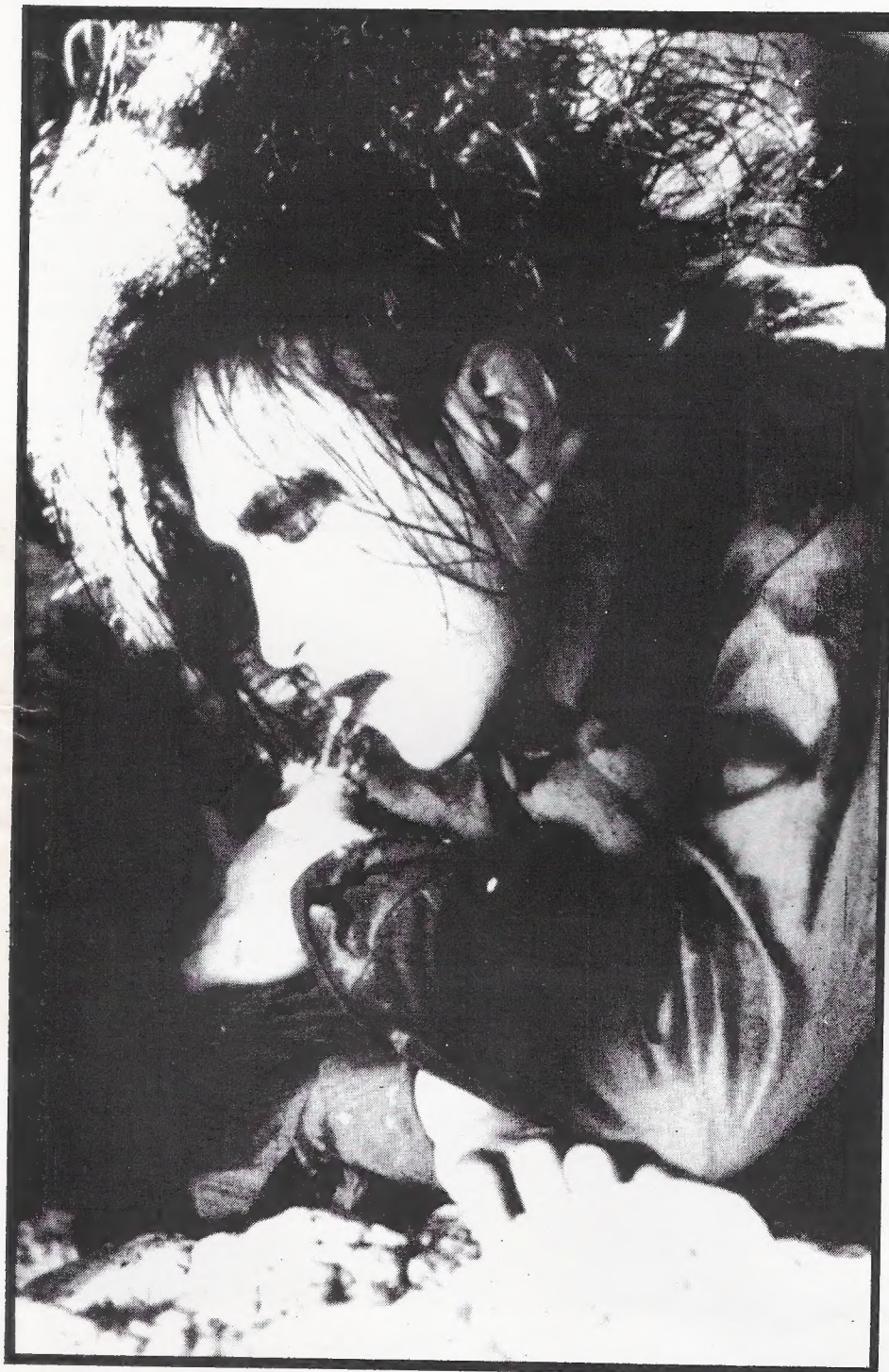
"I was feeling despaired about the whole business — being in a band," recalls Robert. "My whole life was the Cure; I was starting to feel really claustrophobic. I desperately needed to do something outside that whole routine of writing, recording, touring... writing, recording, touring..."

Robert took off on an extended vacation, and the other members of the band got involved with other projects. During this time, drummer Lawrence "Loi" Tolhurst produces an album for And Also The Trees.

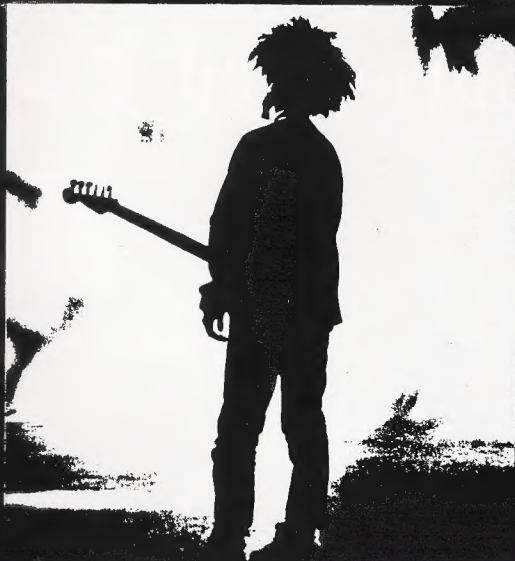
"I have to admit," confides Robert, "the Cure existed in name only during that period [late '82]. It was also at about that time that John McGeoch left the Banshees. [John had replaced Robert as the Banshees' guitarist when the Cure/Banshee tour of '79-'80 concluded.] Steve and Siouxsie asked me to help them out again. I enjoyed my first stint with them, so I decided to give it another go. This only added to the speculation by the press that the Cure had broken up. They wouldn't get off my back about it. I guess I can see why they thought that considering the fact I not only toured with the Banshees, but I also started recording with them."

Robert played guitar on the "Dear Prudence" single and both the **NOCTURNE** and **HYAENA** Lps. He never really considered himself to be a full-fledged Banshee, however, because he still had aspirations of revitalizing his one true love — The Cure.

"I knew I couldn't keep my involvement with both bands simultaneously,"



THE CURE



BOYS DON'T CRY

says Robert. "My work with the Banshees was strictly a result of my friendship with Siouxsie and Steve. There was nothing formal, which is probably why things worked out so well. I even did an additional side project with Steve called The Glove. But because of the Cure's successful reunion gig at the Elephant Fayre Festival, and the subsequent success of THE TOP album [May '84], I felt I had to make the decision to stay with either one band or the other." And we

all know which one he stuck with. The rest is history. Before leaving the Banshees, however, Robert would achieve another historical milestone. On Christmas day 1983, Mr. Smith played on Top Of The Pops with both the Banshees (for "Dear Prudence") and the Cure (for "Love Cats"). It's something that no one else has accomplished even to this date.

Since devoting himself entirely to the Cure, Robert Smith has guided the band to mega-stardom despite various personnel changes. (The current lineup includes Porl Thompson and Perry Bamonte on guitars, Simon Gallup on bass and Boris Williams on drums.) He credits the band's success to its ability to relay the emotions and moods of the songs while recording them and playing them live.

"Every time I play a song, I relive the emotion that inspired it," reveals Robert. "Sometimes that can get pretty intense because many of the emotions I draw upon are quite powerful. But I think it's absolutely necessary to do that if you're gonna present the song the way it was intended to be."

Though raw emotion may be the driving force behind the Cure's music, Robert and the boys draw off of their considerable literary resources as well for inspiration. All the band members are voracious readers and they have numerous extensive discussions about their latest acquisitions at the bookstore.

"The stuff I'm really into now is Albert Camus ["The Plague"] and Marie Stendhal ["Love"]," reveals Robert. "I've always enjoyed poets like Emily Dickinson and Catullus. [What a divergence!] I find that reading helps crystallize a lot of my thoughts, which I then use for my own writing. Oh yeah, I just read "Ecce Homo" by Nietzsche. It's sort of an autobiography. Very intense stuff."

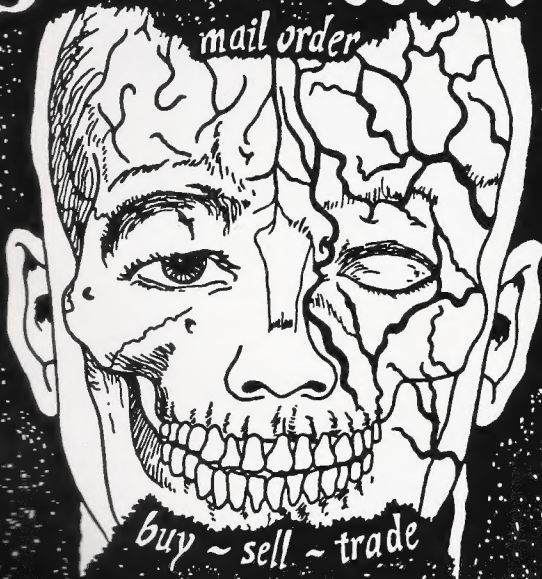
Robert offers another piece of insight as to why he thinks the Cure has achieved so much success through the years.

"Emotions and literary inspirations are fine, but you have to back it up with good songs. There has to be some musical substance there. We wouldn't have gotten this far if there wasn't any."

So don't let "Friday I'm In Love" fool you. There's plenty of good solid substance on WISH to keep you occupied.... Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday too. **END**

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Interview with the Vampires

the vampires' cry



Interview by Michelle Duncan

Even during its heyday of the early and mid '80s, gothic rock never received approval from the English musical establishment — not from the major record labels, and certainly not from the press. When several of the pioneers of this genre, such as Siouxsie & the Banshees, Love & Rockets (Bauhaus), the Cult and the Cure, achieved relative commercial success, they felt the compulsion to deny any of their possible gothic roots. This seemingly validated the

English press's contention that the death rock movement in England was not a viable one. Many in the scene moved on to greener pastures. Such hallowed places as the Bat Cave closed down. Death rock had met its death in the U.K.

Only very recently has there been any stirrings in the dark and musty tomb of the once vibrant morbid movement. This newly rekindled activity has been spearheaded by a gathering of like-minded artists and musicians called — what

else — The Gothic Society. They publish a fanzine entitled **GRIMOIRE**, which runs articles on the latest happenings within the scene, as well as the murky Victorian folklore its steeped in.

At the forefront of this movement is a band called Nosferatu. Along with the Gothic Society, it is their objective to revitalize and unify the death rock scene in England. Their music has a dark majesty and power to it. The imagery the band projects is that of a mystical, bygone era. Their two most recent releases, **THE HELLBOUND** and **VAMPIRE'S CRY** Eps are chilling testimony to the band's flare for the dramatic.

The assignment to meet and interview Nosferatu reminded me somewhat of Renfield's assignment in Bram Stoker's **DRACULA** to meet the Count in his foreboding Transylvanian castle. A large, black 1940s-style hearse pulled up to the gates of Swansea University in Swansea, Wales. Under cover of the misty, moonless night, three shadowy figures emerged from the bowels of the imposing vehicle. Nosferatu had arrived to spread their wings of darkness. Before they were to appear on stage, I met up with the three members — Vlad the bassist, Damien the guitarist and Louis the lead vocalist — in their dressing room for a quick chat.

PROPAGANDA: How did Nosferatu get started?

DAMIEN: Vlad founded the band back in '87. I was in another band and left to join with Vlad. We had similar tastes. There was another singer at the time, but he's not even worth mentioning. This is the line-up that's going to go somewhere. With this line-up, we're confident enough to do some recording, whereas we weren't before. Louis did an incredible job on **HELLBOUND** and **VAMPIRE'S**.

VLAD: I formed Nosferatu along with my wife Sapphire, who has since left the band to devote more of her attention to the Gothic Society, **GRIMOIRE** and her poetry. We formed the band to complement the Society and to create the kind

of music we weren't hearing anywhere else. You have to remember, the gothic scene was dying. We wanted to somehow preserve that art form. We wanted to preserve all the so-called "trappings" of morbid Victorian aesthetics. The Gothic Society's purpose is to encourage the audience out there not to be ashamed of being into goth, no matter what the mainstream press might say. Screw those uptight jerks. Damien, Louis and I all share a common vision of a band that has everything we're into — the image, the music, the lyrics, the attitude. No one else was doing it, so we had to, and we're proud of it.

Speaking of the band's music, what are your influences?

VLAD: Our influences tend to be on the epic side of things like classical and rock music — they all play a part in it. The differences between English goths and American goths is that we're not adverse to allowing heavy rock influence us. We're very much into stuff like early Alice Cooper and Black Sabbath because it's powerful and has a dark, horror imagery that we're into. There's a theatrical side to it that attracts us. I realize that in the States, you're so saturated with hard rock and metal that the goths there would rather steer clear of any similarity to it. It's perfectly understandable. That's not the case here, however.

LOUIS: I admire anything that's intelligent, even if I'm not particularly into that type of music. If there's some thought behind it, whoever is doing it gets my respect.

You spoke about the difference between the gothic movements in England and the U.S. What about the differences between the scene now and when goth first started in the early '80s?

VLAD: One very obvious difference is in terms of the live scene. In England, there isn't the support system you once had. You don't have the kinds of clubs supporting the scene as existed back in the early '80s. There's nothing like the Bat Cave or the Music Machine now. Consequently, it's



Nosferatu emerges from their tour hearse to brave the light of day.

harder to build a following. That's what **GRIMOIRE** is all about. We have to build a network on our own. We've already developed quite an extensive mailing list. We keep the subscribers informed about what's going on with the band and the scene in general.

DAMIEN: A lot of people in England really rely on it for all their information. They know that the regular music press isn't going to cover what's happening.

VLAD: As a whole, we and the other bands in the scene are not getting any industry support. We're all by ourselves out there. The record companies aren't interested in bands like ours because they're looking for new bands that fit the latest trend. They see goth as anachronistic — very un-trendy. In a way, that's the way we want it. We've achieved what success we've gotten completely on our own terms.

DAMIEN: Isn't that the true measure of integrity? No one can tell us what to do. We have our own distribution network set up. **VAMPIRE'S CRY** has done quite nicely. We had some small independent labels interested in us, but even they wanted to change us. Thanks, but no thanks. We like our music the way it is.

Your songs are so rich with imagery. Where do you get inspiration for your lyrics?

LOUIS: It's more about feelings than outside influences or events. Emotions play an important part in it. There's quite a lot of storytelling — stories about the past, present and future — almost how a novel would be presented. Vlad's the main songwriter though.

VLAD: Well, we swap ideas, really. There's no real set process to writing songs. We all go off on our own and come up with ideas. Sometimes we tape them and go over it all when we get together. I guess I do most of the arrangements however after we come up with definite concepts for songs.

How far do you think Nosferatu and the gothic movement as a whole can go?

VLAD: We're starting to see more and more bands form under the gothic banner. That's a definite sign that the scene is getting more healthy. For a long time, new bands were terrified at the prospect of being tagged gothic. They may have wanted to be dark and mysterious, but shied away from that label at all costs. The club situation has also improved recently. There are more clubs now that have exclusively goth nights — something we haven't seen in years. As for Nosferatu itself, we've seen our audience grow tremendously over the past year or so. People come from hundreds of miles around to see us. Oh yes, I'd like to take this opportunity to say "Hi" to all the people who have written us from the States. We love hearing from you.

Would you consider touring America?



Sapphire, queen of The Gothic Society.

LOUIS: Sure, as soon as we could afford it. If it were possible, I think we'd make the trip every week!

DAMIEN: It really comes down to finances. Of all the countries abroad we'd like to tour, America has to be considered our number one choice. In fact, we're actively seeking promoters over there right now to maybe set something up.

VLAD: Especially for Los Angeles. I'd like to go there because I know there are a few good goth clubs in that area. Also, I hear there's quite a scene developing in New York, so obviously it would be a natural for us to go there as well.

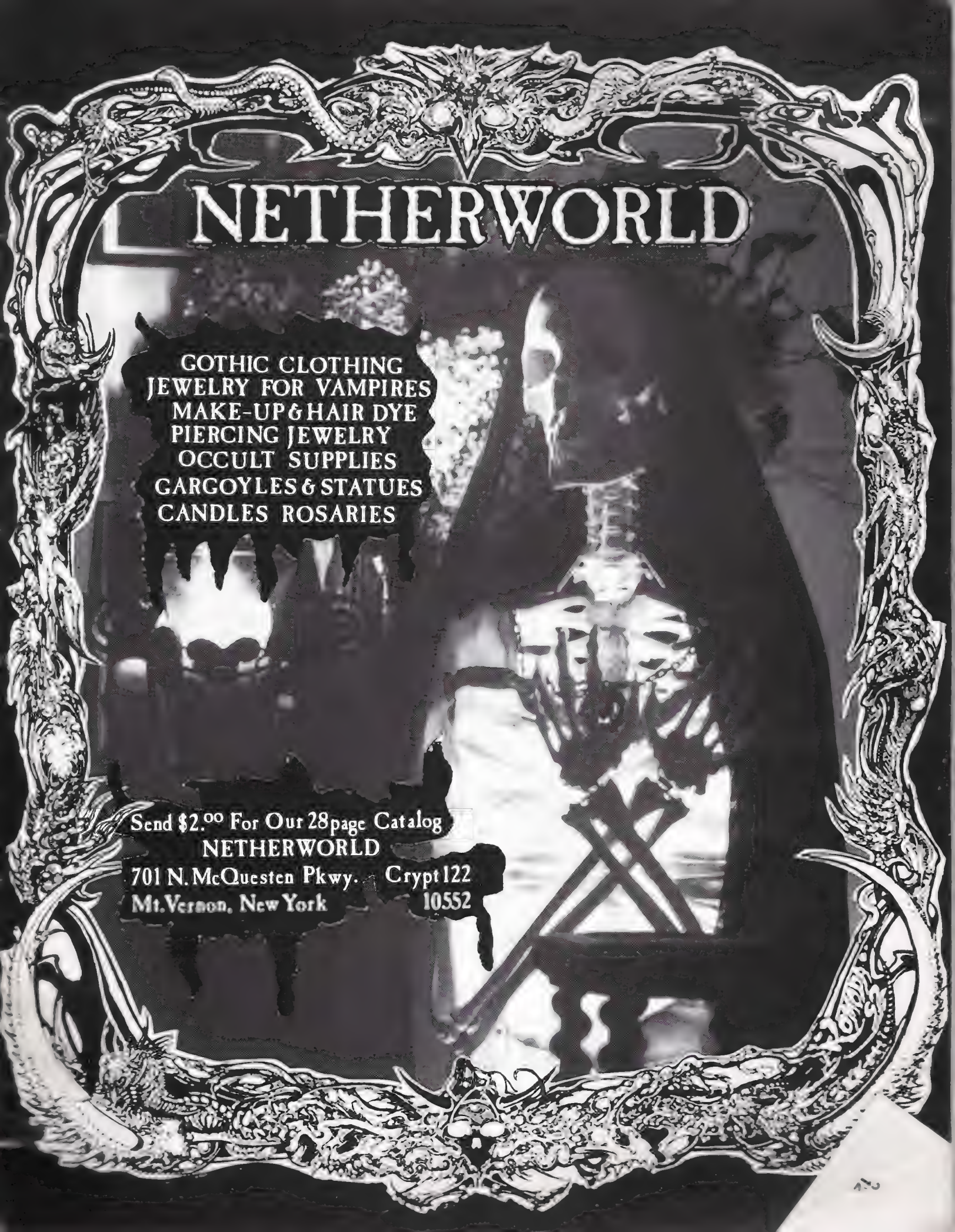


Soon after the interview concluded, the band made their appearance before a sea of their faithful. The music was both dynamic and dramatic. The crowd moved in synch with Vlad's powerful, rhythmic bass, as Damien's guitar weaved haunting melodies. The deep, husky vocals of Louis pierced the misty night air like a knife. That evening, Nosferatu showed why they are at the vanguard of England's new gothic movement.

Just as crucial to the resurgence of the gothic underground in England is the Gothic Society and its fanzine **GRIMOIRE**. This fascinating little 'zine prints articles on subjects of interest to any truly black-hearted soul. Just recently, **GRIMOIRE** ran intriguing pieces on Aleister Crowley and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the legend of Nosferatu: King of the Undead, and the history of the gothic scene in England.

One of the principal participants in running the Gothic Society and **GRIMOIRE** is none other than the Queen of the Damned herself, Sapphire Aurora. This poetess used to set her enchanting verse to the chilling melodies of Nosferatu. Now she sets them down in black n' white on the pages of **GRIMOIRE**. Sapphire has also published a booklet of her haunting mood pieces called **IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOON**. The titles alone entice the soul: "Is There a Ghost that Haunts This Heart," "Tale of the Vampire," "Spiral Whispers," etc. Each poem is accompanied by one of her amazingly atmospheric illustrations. Truly a collection to cherish.

For information on anything Nosferatu and the Gothic Society have to offer, including membership, please send a self-addressed envelope and an International Reply Coupon to: The Gothic Society, 138 Canterbury Rd., Harrow, Middlesex HA1 4PB England.



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TEXT AND PHOTOS BY FRED H. BERGER

Aum, Amen!
The Evils hold sway,
Witness of Egoity becoming free,
Wherein the Will of Heaven does not rule,
For Man severed himself from Your Kingdom,
And forgot Your Names,
Ye Fathers in the Heavens.

Such was the triumphant Hymn of Evil which Jesus of Nazareth heard where ever he traveled. Sung by the hosts of Lucifer, it is in essence a reversal of the Lord's Prayer which Christ had given to mankind as a declaration of independence from the tyranny of insatiable egoism. And upon the Cross this Man-God broke the strangle hold which the

Angel of the Pit had on humanity since time immemorial. It was a cosmic victory of Life over Death, a victory symbolized by the spear which pierced his pure and blameless heart, causing the Earth to be soaked with his sacred blood. The skies grew dark around a midday sun, and the bowels of Hell quaked and were nearly split asunder as the life drained out of the Savior. And for the first time since he had come into the world, the Hellish chorus fell silent.

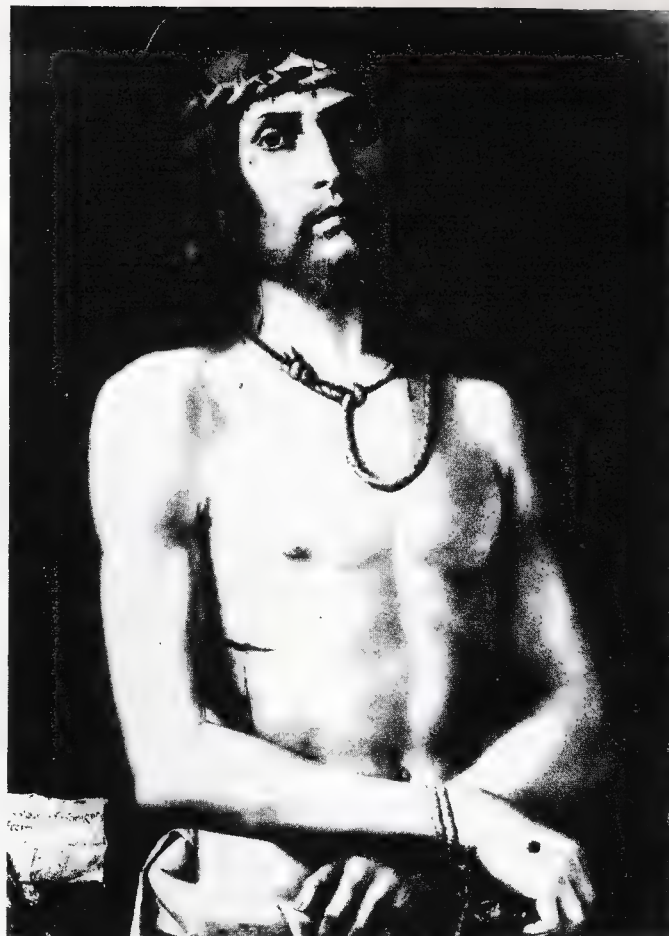
It would be nearly 2,000 years before the Hymn of Evil would again be heard, only this time it would be sung by human voices, the voices of Nazi officers in the service of a new blood religion, founded not on the sanctity of the blood of Christ, but on the

sanctity of the blood of the Aryan Race. For many centuries superstition held that saying the Lord's Prayer backwards constituted a form of Black Mass, yet no one was able to trace the origin or significance of this belief. Then came Adolf Hitler, who would come to possess the spear which killed Jesus, known to legend as the Spear of Destiny or the Holy Lance. His obsession with this magical talisman and his occult research into its awesome power would reveal to him this age-old demon chant, a chant which he would require the inner core of the SS to recite in irreversible vows of allegiance to Lucifer. With the SS thus initiated through Satanic rites into the Nazi creed of Nordic supremacy, they would come to be a brotherhood of Templars, guardians of the Holy Grail of pure blood, to spearhead the drive for world empire and an Aryan Millennium. The cult of the blood would become so ingrained in the psyche of the German people - especially the young - that wounded Hitler Youth in Allied captivity would refuse transfusions if they could not be certain of the donor's racial purity, preferring to die instead. This passion for self-immolation in the service of the race was demonstrated in its most exaggerated form when it came to sacrificial rites wherein the heart of a young SS volunteer would be cut out and offered to the Norse god Wotan.

Yet, from an occult perspective, it would take more than volkish superstition and blood rites to realize the Nazi dream of a world ruled by mutant supermen, and with this in mind efforts were made to incorporate Eastern mysticism into the master plan. In 1936 Reichfuehrer Heinrich Himmler, chief of the SS, assembled senior SS officers at Dachau concentration camp for a lecture on karma and re-incarnation, in which he assured his men that they were a time-defying order of heros who through the ages had fought together for the victory of Aryan man. And to harden their hearts for the coming struggle, he quoted Krishna from the Hindu poem Bhagavad-Gita (Song of the Blessed) - "One should not give up the activity to which one is born, even though this should be attended by evil; for all things are enveloped by evil, as fire by smoke."

A SECRET DOCTRINE FOR SUPERMEN

As the SS was further initiated into esoteric realms of myth and magick, Nazi occultists were journeying to the Himalayan Kingdom of Tibet in search of the remnant



Bartolomeo Montagna: "Ecce Homo", 16th century

Nietzsche dismissed Christ as "an aphrodisiac - a pagan Adonis." Wagner idolized him as "a tall, blond Teutonic Gallilean." The conflict over the nature of Jesus was to destroy their intimate friendship, leaving both with a sad and bitter loneliness.

of the ancient Aryan Sun Oracle. According to legend, the shrine and its priesthood had been established 10,000 years ago when Atlantis, the home of the pre-historic race of Aryan God-Men, was destroyed by a Great Flood and vanished forever beneath the waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. This remnant, hidden in subterranean monasteries, had taken the form of demonic mystery cults of Cave Adepts, men who through countless incarnations and by means of astral projection sought throughout the Post-Atlantean Age to revive the Luciferic Race which would once again set itself up as God. One thousand Tibetan lamas were taken to Berlin, and from there they were to harness the Powers of Darkness in the service of Nazi Germany and a new Satanic religion destined to replace the Cross with the swastika, the symbol of Agni, the Tibetan sun-god. And as German U-boats prowled the depths of the sea between Europe and North America, under or-



"One should not give up
the activity to which
one is born, even though
this should be attended
by evil; for all things
are enveloped by evil,
as fire by smoke."

— the words of Krishna
from the Bhagavad-Gita

Tibetan lama communing with his Secret Masters of the Astral Plane.

ders from Hitler to discover whatever remained of fabled Atlantis, he would declare, "Man is becoming God! Those who see in National Socialism nothing more than a political movement know scarcely anything of it. It is more than a religion; it is the will to create mankind anew."

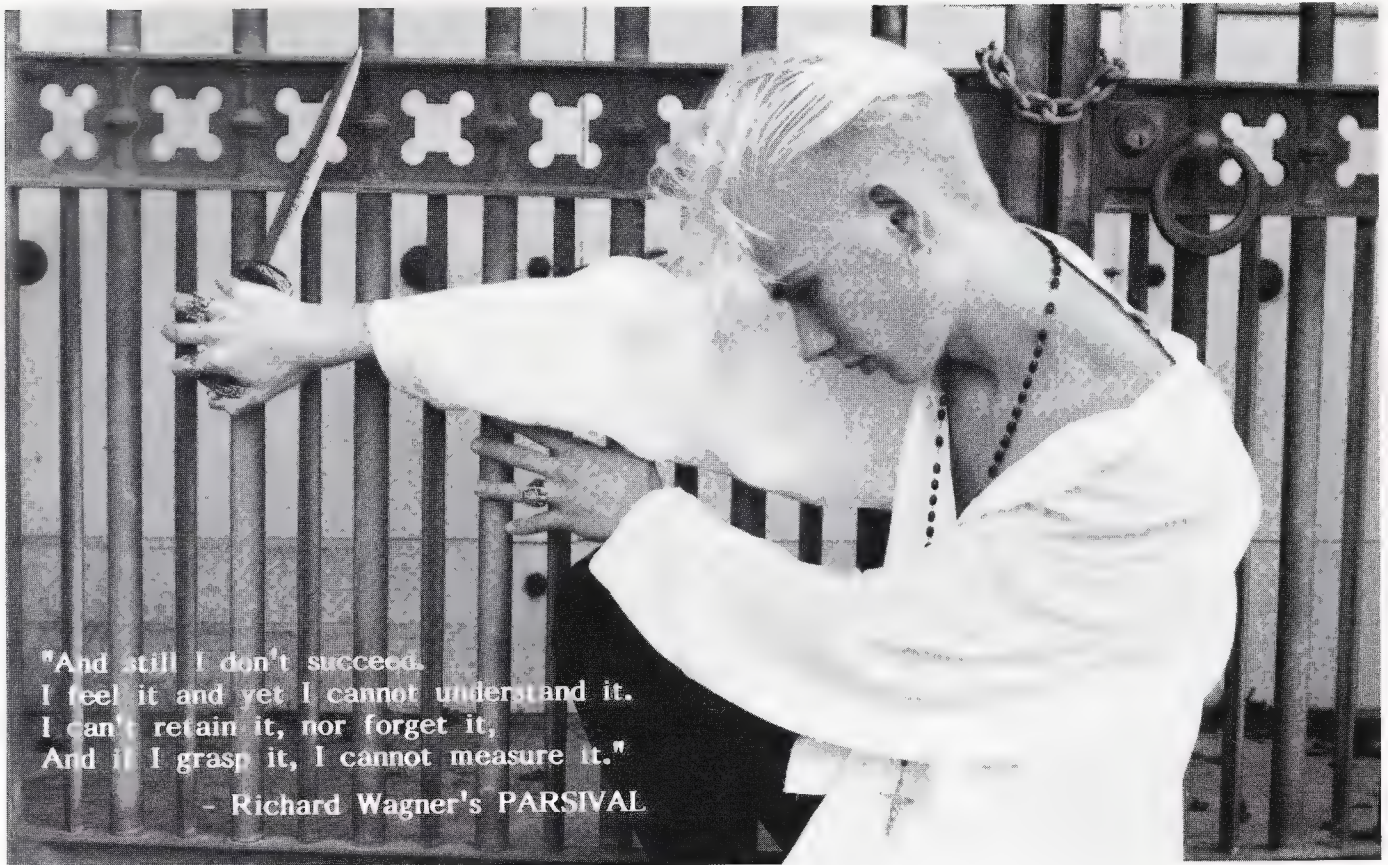
To the Tibetans, Hitler was the realization of their wildest dreams, for it was their own 10,000-year-old Secret Doctrine which first spoke of the lost continent in the northern ocean, and of the magical Aryan race which was represented by the sign of the swastika, the "sun-wheel" of Agni, with which he whisked the cosmos into being. And out of the ancient Sun Oracle in the Himalayas, this sacred emblem spread to distant pagan lands and became the most universal of all religious symbols. The lamas were hypnotized by the dark spectacle of Nazi pageantry, of massive swastika bedecked rallies and nocturnal torchlit processions dedicated to the same evil hierarchies with which they had communed throughout the millennia. They were over-joyed by the determination of the German Fuehrer to revive in his people the psychic powers of the Antediluvian Age which, they believed, would entail faculties of time travel and control over the elements. In order to achieve these astounding mutations, the Tibetan community in the Nazi capital would give sustenance to the Powers at the very source of the Nordic race soul, and use their tremendous skills of visualization in conjunction with racial purification along the lines of the Hindu caste system, that harsh doctrine of racial segregation imposed on India by Aryan invaders 4,000 years ago.

The light of Christ was to be forever extinguished with the advent of the Aryan Millennium, with the Nazi Fuehrer, as leader of the Luciferic race, assuming the role of Antichrist, the prophetic Beast of Revelation. It was a destiny conceived in the fiery pit of Hell and foreseen by a callow youth, a denizen of the Viennese flophouses, a dabbler in the occult and hallucinogenic drugs whose name would one day evoke nothing but fear and loathing. Having by the age of 15 fully digested all the works of the viciously anti-Christian Friedrich Nietzsche, who proclaimed "God is dead" and "Behold, the Superman," the young Hitler had acquired a state of mind wherein the supposition of a "Master Race" liberated from the false god of Judeo-Christianity became an unshakeable article of faith. It was Nietzsche's THE ANTICHRIST

which convinced his adolescent disciple of the ruination of the proud and unspoiled Teutonic tribes by the poisonous barbs of a Judaism disguised as Christianity, and which would plant in a youth's futile imagination the seed of what would later be known as "The Final Solution." In it the mad philosopher spews his venom, condemning the Jews as "the most catastrophic people of history" and Christianity as "the ultimate Jewish consequence." The title of this hateful lash-out of words gives away, none too subtly, the true identity of its author, the infernal spirit which would gradually come to possess an embittered and megalomaniacal Hitler, the failed artist turned mystic, with all its Apocalyptic fury.

It would not be until he first attended a performance of Richard Wagner's PARSIVAL, at the age of 20, that Hitler's vision of a messianic destiny would begin to crystallize, to assert itself through the mysteries of the Holy Spear and the Holy Blood which lie at the heart of this stupendous operatic Grail quest. And with this mighty opus, Wagner posits his Church of the Aryans around the Holy Grail of pure blood, wherein the Spear which pierced the side of a Teutonic Christ is the symbol of the noble and miraculous blood of the race. Whereas Nietzsche rejected Christianity in its entirety, expressing a marked preference for Buddhism which he praises lavishly in THE ANTICHRIST, Wagner clung to the Cross with the proviso that Jesus was not a Jew, but an Aryan, whose blood and that of his racial kinsmen contained the very secret of spiritual illumination. Consequently, his Germanized Messiah sought death at the hands of the Jews as a warning to the Teutons, whose only salvation rested in racial purity and victory over the children of Abraham, an enemy race dedicated to the destruction of the Aryans through the defilement of their sacred blood.

The Maestro's obsession with the heroic suffering of his Aryan Savior led to extensive studies concerning the incredible history of the Spear of Destiny, whose legend states, "Whosoever possesses this Holy Lance and understands the power it serves, holds in his hands the destiny of the world for good or evil." It was a promise kept from ancient to medieval times, but with the onset of the Enlightenment in the 18th century, the old legend was forgotten by all except a few romantics and mystics, men such as Nietzsche and Wagner. And as the two of them stood together before the holy relic which had been



Model: John Koviak

The Grail Knight Parsival contemplates the Spear of Destiny beneath Klingsor's castle.

put on display at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna - the philosopher full of contempt for the Hebrew Messiah, the composer full of reverence for the Aryan Christ - both realized that to possess the object of their fascination was out of the question, for it belonged to the Austro-Hungarian imperial family. Yet at the same time, they saw it within their power to influence some other man of destiny, one who would lead Germany to an era of glory and supremacy not seen since the Middle Ages. Little did they know then, but in just 50 years time they would have their wish, and then some.

In 1909 Adolf Hitler saw PARSIVAL under the influence of the mind-expanding hallucinogen peyote, which coupled with the ethereal majesty of the music and powerfully moving Good Friday mystification, transported him into a transcendental state in which he perceived that he was the reincarnation of the evil black magician Klingsor, the character who opposes the hero Parsival for possession of the Spear of Destiny. In the clairvoyant delirium of his drug-induced altered state, Hitler also understood that the character with which he identified was based on an actual historical figure, Landulf II of Capua, the most dreaded sorcerer of 9th century

Europe, who by means of the black arts and political intrigues sought to steal the Holy Lance and thereby achieve world domination and the utter obliteration of Christianity. Ecstatic beyond reason over these fateful revelations, Hitler then proceeded to the Hofburg where for hours he meditated over the ancient weapon in its glass case, visualizing the moment when the Centurion plunged it into the heart of the dying Jesus, whom he loathed as the supreme Jewish despoiler of Nietzsche's beloved "untamed blond beast." Although rejecting Wagner's worship of a Teutonic Christ, he did accept the composer's doctrines of racial superiority and the mystical powers of blood purity. And with a mind poisoned by the forbidden fruit of Eastern mysticism, this lost soul from the flophouse was all too eager to prostrate himself before the demonic entity emanating from the Spear of Destiny, the spirit of Antichrist which would compell him to share in its own futile unrest.

Of his first encounter with the dark side of the Spear's inherently dualistic nature, Hitler wrote, "The air became stifling so that I could barely breathe. The noisy scene of the Treasure House seemed to melt away before my eyes. I stood alone and trembling

before the hovering form of the Superman - a Spirit sublime and fearful, a countenance intrepid and cruel. In holy awe, I offered my soul as a vessel of his Will." It was as it had been in a prior life, the life of Landulf of Capua, supreme initiate into the secrets of demonism and sexual black magic, who from his mountain top citadel invoked that same dread and terrible Beast of Revelation.

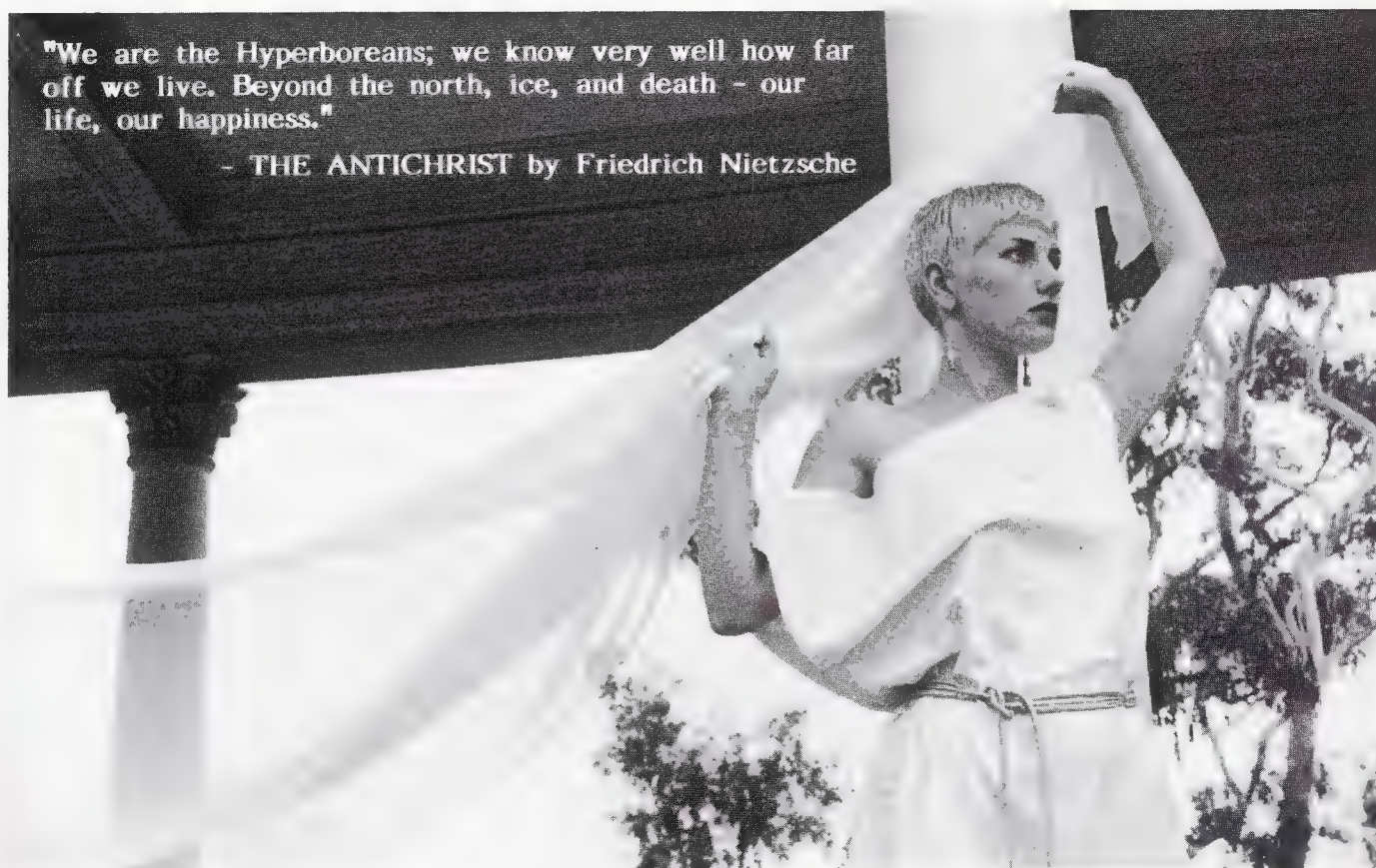
As fate would have it, in the same year that Hitler first beheld the Superman, the notorious Satanist Aleister Crowley claimed to have "crossed the Abyss" and to have returned as an Adept with superhuman powers. This was the same black magician who identified himself with the apocalyptic Beast, and who would establish his seminal Abbey of Thelema on the isle of Sicily near the ruins of Landulf's fortress. The startling similarities between the mystical transformation of both these demonic individuals would eventually lead to a sinister collaboration between Thelemic and Nazi occult circles. Like Crowley, Hitler had been initiated into the supersensible realm of what is known to Tibetan Buddhism as the Great White Brotherhood, that otherworldly council of Secret Masters who guide humanity from the Astral Plane. Henceforth Hitler would follow the path re-

vealed to him, emulating his "karmic Kling-sor" through sadistic rites and swastika mysticism until he obtained that which the Landulf could not - the Spear of Destiny itself.

THE TWILIGHT OF THE ANTICHRISTS

It was March 12, 1938, the day of Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria, when Hitler arrived in Vienna and proceeded directly to the Hofburg which had been occupied some hours earlier by an SS detachment under the command of Heinrich Himmler. It was near midnight when the Fuehrer entered the Treasure House, where for more than an hour he communed in solitude with the Spear. He had not seen the sacred relic since 1909, and now he had returned to claim it as his own, and thus, through world conquest, achieve the ultimate destiny of Aryan man.

Just outside the ornate doors behind which the Nazi leader savored his moment of greatest glory, there stood SS Colonel Wolfram von Sievers, head of the Ahnenerbe (Ancestral Heritage) - the official Nazi bureau of occult science. This mysterious organization would include in its ranks occultists from the Tibetan Cave Oracles and Aleister Crowley's Ordo Templi Orientis - all sworn to the advent of a new age of Super-



Model: Tammy Julian/Photos: Fred Berger

The Ahnenerbe staged outdoor ceremonies in honor of Norse pagan and Atlantean mythology.

men and magick under the banner of the swastika. In the course of Hitler's war, which began in the year following his acquisition of the Lance, the Ahnenerbe would be called upon to perform inhuman pseudo-scientific experiments with living concentration camp inmates, with von Sievers compiling a collection of Jewish cadavers in order to determine from the bone marrow the source and nature of the "uncanny survival instinct of the Jews." Meanwhile, Himmler would order the SS to capture alive Jewish-Bolshevik Commissars whom he considered the "archetypes of this nefarious race," so that their heads could be properly severed and preserved for phrenological study. And after six years of world war and mass extermination, the SS, under the direction of Ahnenerbe alchemists, scattered the ashes from death camp crematoriums across the length and breadth of the collapsing Reich as a diabolical form of "racial pest control" intended to prevent the Jews from ever returning to Germany.

As this last horrific act of sacrifice to the powers of darkness was being carried out, another sacrificial rite was soon to take place within the Tibetan community of Berlin. Having failed in their mission to resurrect the Luciferic race of Atlantis by means of a Nazi victory, and with the Soviet Army closing in on the capital, all 1,000 Tibetan lamas chose suicide in the Oriental tradition of Hari-Kari. When the Russians arrived at their dormitory complex, they discovered their naked bodies lying in orderly rows, each with a ceremonial dagger penetrating the abdomen. At this time Himmler fell into British hands, but soon thereafter took cyanide - the hangman was not to die with a rope around his neck.

And just one hour after the Holy Lance was discovered by American troops in the city of Nuremberg, Hitler committed suicide with a gunshot to the head. Yet, for as long as he possessed the Spear no harm could befall him, as was witnessed in the course of two assassination attempts which miraculously had no effect on his person, but which caused terrible carnage all around him. He would follow his Satanic destiny to the bitter end, dragging the entire world down with him into a terrifying abyss of death, destruction, and hatred.

And in the ruins and desolation of a defeated Germany, there sat in a guarded cell the unrepentant figure of Wolfram von Sievers, sentenced to hang for crimes against

humanity. On the morning of his execution, he received one last visitor, an enigmatic Crowleyesque personage before whom he knelt in reverence to receive the incantation of a Black Mass, a final hymn of worship to the powers of Evil. When justice was done, an impoverished, heroin-addicted Aleister Crowley would claim that the Nazis had stolen the sacred swastika from him. He died in 1947, two years after the defeat of Hitler's Reich, in the same wretched state as that other antichrist Friedrich Nietzsche, alone and with the madness of advanced syphilis hounding him to his dying breath.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." - Galatians: Chapter 6, verse 7

Today the Spear of Destiny is back in the Treasure House of the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, Austria. It is on view to the public from Monday to Saturday, 9AM to 6PM. Admission is free. †

Footnote: For more information on the occult significance of the Crucifixion, as well as the sorcerer Landulf II of Capua and the early history of the Holy Lance, refer to the HOLY SPEAR HOLY BLOOD article in Propaganda Issue No. 18. This feature also includes an excellent picture of the Lance.



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a chaos of desire

by black tape for a blue girl
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existential tales of memory, fear and desire; dissolving moods with calm ambience confronting pained emotions, powerful vocals from julianne (of skinner box) strongly complement oscar's searing voice and vicki richard's snake violin. "this is beauty with an edge, perhaps even a slightly desperate air."—WHOLE EARTH REVIEW

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a 16 track retrospective—from the early days of dark industrial goth, to recent hypnotic industrial dance tracks. "this is an excellent experience for the ears... a band on the edge of music, with aching tension between male and female vocals... exposing a raw nerve of electronic wealth... dramatically rough with a raw beauty."—BSIDE

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lycia

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C · U · R · V · E

Interview by Stephanie Young

Photos by Derek Ridgers



DOPPELGÄNGER — a phenomenon originating from ancient Germanic folklore, where the ghostly double of a living person would manifest itself and subsequently shadow its earthly counterpart. It also hap-

pens to be the title of the debut album from a similarly mysterious entity called Curve. Their fellow Brits like to describe this new band from London as the "Gothic Eurythmics." They project a dark and unapproachable persona on stage, as

well as on vinyl. Lead singer Toni Halliday has been dubbed the heir-apparent to Siouxsie Sioux's throne as alternative music's Ice Goddess. Her elegant aloofness and icy Cleopatra stares have captured the imagination of England's indie-rock audience. The band's prior releases, four Eps, all skyrocketed into the national Top 40 charts. The critical acclaim from England's normally skeptical music press was so hysterically positive, it was almost scary. Not quite as frightening, however, as the music Curve has seen fit to create. It seems that Toni has a few of her own demons [and doppelgangers] following her around. The lyrics she spins are ones of torment and loathing — *"The hurricane inside me, The Devil inside me, The horror in my head."* The doppelganger that shadows Toni is the myriad of personal hardships that have plagued her since early on in life.

"I still have a lot of demons that have to be exorcised," says the diva of doom. "My music is very therapeutic in that way. Certain events trigger certain emotions which in turn trigger lyrical ideas. It's like I get these voices in my head. The words seem to come in spurts, maybe three or four lines at a time — then nothing for awhile. So to people who listen to these lyrics, the words seem detached and impenetrable, but they mean something very definite to me. These ideas can come from something that pissed me off yesterday or from the distant past." Toni's distant past was not a happy

one. Her father was a self-styled, modern-day pirate who would cruise around the Mediterranean, family in tow, and ransack yachts and cargo ships. One day he simply abandoned Toni, her mother and her sister while they were docked in a Greek port. She hasn't seen him since. The family returned to England, only to end up on the dole in the economically depressed northeastern city of Sunderland. It was a very tough existence for a young girl. Her mother became a heavy drinker and at only eleven years old, Toni became involved with street gangs and a punk band called Incest. It was her dubious introduction to the music scene.

It would be an injustice, however, to portray Ms. Halliday in real everyday life as the dour demoness she plays in her Curve role. Toni is as down-to-earth and congenial as they come. Why then does she feel the compulsion to use her music as a conduit for only her darkest and most dire emotions.

"I sincerely believe that everyone has a hidden dark side," she explains, "a mischievous alter ego. [There's that doppelganger again.] That side seems to rear itself more commonly with creative people — look at van Gogh, Nietzsche, Crowley." Crowley? "Well, I'm presently reading his book, **NUMBER OF THE BEAST**. It kinda goes into some of this topic. Creative people actively try to get in touch with untapped feelings — the kind of stuff most folks keep suppressed because it's too painful to deal with. Consequently, you end up being attracted



Curve's Toni Halliday and Dean Garcia — the Eurythmics' dark alter ego.



to the things that should repel you. For me, it's all the shit I've been through. I also do it for the listeners' sake. I want my songs to be dark enigmas at first listen, where the listener will detect only a tiny speck of meaning and want to investigate further — shed more light on it with each listen. Each person should come away with their own interpretations. That's why I'll never get too literal. It's important to keep a distance, a sense of mystery. That's what made someone like Bowie so exciting. He had an air of mystery about him."

The cryptic lyrics of songs like "Wish You Dead," "Horror Head" and "Fait Accompli" pay exquisite homage to this intent.

By the age of 16, Toni had already been in various bands and was being interviewed on a regional music TV show when the Eurythmics' Dave Stewart sat up and took notice while viewing the program. Toni was expressing her passionate admiration for her role models Siouxsie Sioux and Annie Lennox, Mr. Stewart's partner. He was so impressed with her intelligence and forthrightness that he immediately set the wheels in motion to contact her.

"I guess the rest is history," she recalls. "I moved to London, and Dave helped me form a band called the Uncles. We released a single on MCA." But the band split up, and Dave Stewart introduced Toni to one of the Eurythmics' touring musicians, bass player Dean Garcia. The two hit it off musically and put together a group called State Of Play, who released a big-budget production for Virgin Records.

"The album sucked because too many slimy A+R weasels got their greasy paws on the production," laments Toni. "It wasn't our project anymore. It became some watered-down piece of corporate crap." Toni and Dean parted ways — he taking off for Spain to get married. It wasn't until four years later in 1989 that he came back to look her up to attempt another project. In the interim, Toni released a forgettable solo album on Dave Stewart's record label, Anxious. She also started dating the Jesus & Mary Chain's producer,

Alan Moulder. The stage was set for the creation of Curve — a phoenix to rise out of the ashes of Toni's numerous shattered expectations.

"Curve came about as a reaction to all the nonsense we went through with State Of Play," insists Toni. "It was a reaction to all our mistakes. We were going to do things completely different. Anxious Records allowed us to do all our own engineering and recording at Alan's studio — no interference, no manipulation. Dean wrote all the music and I wrote all the lyrics. And we did all the recording and mixing very quickly to capture the true feelings of the songs. The State Of Play disaster was a big white elephant that took us a whole fucking year to complete. With Curve, we were able to get out four Eps and an Lp in the same amount of time, and with far superior results, because it's real, it's us."

Curve's music is thickly layered and sensuous. Dean's bass is actually melodic while remaining relentlessly rhythmic. Guitarists Alex Mitchell and Debbie Smith add a cascading wall of guitar noise that complements Toni's deep, breathy vocals. The sound they achieve can best be described as a brooding mixture of the Jesus & Mary Chain and the Cocteau Twins [two of Toni's favorite]. Many have lumped Curve in with the ethereal "shoe-gazing" bands like Lush and Ride, but Curve have much more going for them — a dramatically complex history to draw on, and a dark elegance not seen in contemporary music since the classical majesty of Renaissance.

"I adore glamour," reveals the runway model-like vocalist. "I'm absolutely obsessed with it. I feel style is something you develop with maturity. A lot of these young 'shoe-gazers' avoid it like the plague. It's something that comes as you develop more confidence to express yourself. Music without a sense of style, mystery and sensuality is like death — it might as well not exist. Mystery is sexy."

If the recent British music polls that show Toni as the number one "Object of Desire" are any indication, then this seductive siren must be steering Curve on the right course. Can the doppelgangers keep up?

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ROSETTA STONE



by Patrick Cusack



Making the dark sound of Rosetta Stone are Karl North, Porl King and Porl Young.

When the Rosetta Stone was unearthed by archaeologists in the late 18th century, it unlocked the mystery to deciphering ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. It turned out to be the discovery of the age. As the 20th century draws to a close, another Rosetta Stone promises to make history as well. This one is a musical entity that resides in Liverpool, England... and it is without a doubt one of the finest goth bands to come out of the U.K. since the original Nephilim. They are highly regarded in Europe and are now beginning to make waves on our shores. They have already made the Top Ten on the U.K. indie charts and they have a loyal following called the Quarriers.

Rosetta Stone's sound is reminiscent of early Mission and Sisters Of Mercy, but their delivery of this sound is extremely original. Their approach to goth is not one of total doom n' gloom. Although all the dark elements are there, they are taking goth in a poppier, more accessible direction. Because of this, they have been called the next big thing in goth. By every indication, they are going to be huge.

Originally a duo consisting of Porl King (vocals and guitars) and Karl North (bass), Rosetta have recently become a trio with the addition of Porl Young (also on guitars), who joined their ranks after producing the band's first single. Drums and keyboards have been provided all along by Madame Razor, who I presume is a relative of Doktor Avalanche.

In early 1989, they released their first cassette Ep, **CHAPTER AND VERSE**. This was followed by **AND HOW THEY REJOICE**, and a third cassette, **RETRIBUTION**. These releases are now out of print and impossible to find. In May of 1990, Rosetta released their first effort on vinyl, the three song Ep, **DARKNESS AND LIGHT**, on Futurity Records. This is now also out of print and very rare. With this release selling

out in two weeks time, the band was then able to sign a deal with England's Expression Records.

The summer of 1991 saw the release of the single, "Leave Me For Dead," a perfect goth pop song that set the pace for the debut Lp, **AN EYE FOR THE MAIN CHANCE**, released in October of 1991 and is a remarkable achievement. Almost every song is perfect, ranking it right up there with the Sisters' **FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS**, and Christian Death's **ONLY THEATRE OF PAIN** as one of the most important albums the gothic genre has ever produced.

After the success of the Lp and a well-received U.K. tour behind them, Rosetta Stone returned to the studio to record their greatest accomplishment to date, the 12" single "Adrenaline." With its soaring guitars and irresistible chorus, it is quite possibly the most danceable goth record ever. This put Rosetta Stone in a league all their own. It proved they were able to make classic records on par with anything the Sisters or the Mission ever did.

Rosetta Stone are now working on their second Lp, which should be out at about the time this goes to press. Expectations are very high for the new material, especially since Rosetta have only improved with each subsequent release.

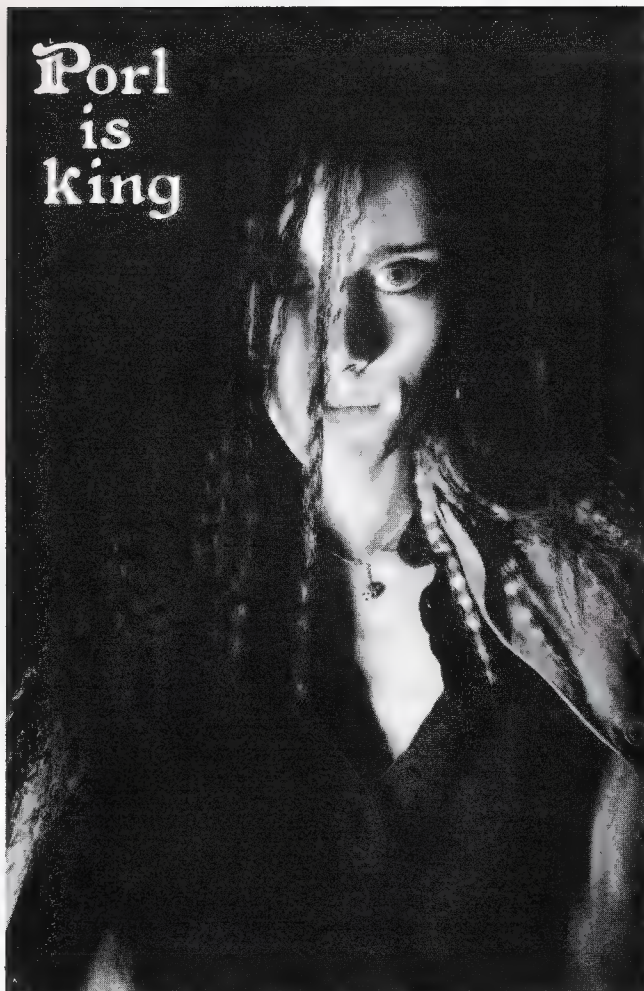
The following interview was done with lead singer Porl King.

PROPAGANDA: When was Rosetta Stone formed?

PORL KING: We formed Rosetta Stone in 1987, although our first live appearance wasn't until June, 1988.

Are you aware that there was an early '70s British band called Rosetta Stone, and that there is also a U.S. dance band with the same name?

It seems that Rosetta Stone is a popular name. We're aware of a number of bands using it, but as yet it hasn't caused us any real problems. Our record company was a little



apprehensive when our album was due to be released in Japan, as apparently the '70s band is still quite popular and selling records there.

How do you feel about the success you've achieved so far?

It depends on how you measure success. We are the most successful goth band in Britain since the Nephilim, but we're still unable to attain the attentions of the British music press. We are contented by the fact that we're succeeding in our chosen genre, but disillusioned by the fact that the more mainstream acts whose record sales and attendances are similar to ours receive so much exposure for achieving the same as ourselves.

Do you feel your success can be partly contributed to the fact that you filled the void that was left in the goth scene when the Sisters sold out and the Mission turned into an atrocious pop band?

Yes, we know this played a part, but this cannot be the only contributing factor. People forget that Christian Death, Sex Gang, etc. have never really gone away. And the directions that the Sisters and the Mission chose to undertake never really improved their audience. We wish to make gothic as accessible as possible. We write music for the dance floor and not self-indulgent glorification of serial killers or romanticize about vampires.

Does it bother you when people constantly compare you to the Sisters and the Mission?

Comparisons to the bands that we admire and that are indisputably the best in their field can only be taken as complimentary.

Was there any truth to the rumor that Wayne Hussey was going to produce your first Ep? If so, what happened?

Wayne Hussey offered to produce our first single after he saw us open for the Mission at one of their special fan club concerts. Unfortunately, he was unavailable at the time that we went to record. He did, however, suggest that we

credit him as executive producer on the sleeve, but we considered this to be unfair to Colin Richardson, who had taken a great deal of time producing it for us instead.

Will you ever re-release your early Eps that are out of print now for the U.S. fans who never heard them?

There are no plans to re-release them, unless if some U.S. labels see this and decide to work something out with us. We have released a compilation Ep, though, of the better tracks from those releases. It's available only through us, however.

What are your major influences?

Musically, it changes week to week. But mostly, the March Violets, Salvation, Skeletal Family, Virgin Prunes, Play Dead, to name a few. Otherwise, it's amphetamines and the negative side of human nature, which we all have, like it or not.

How is the U.K. goth scene right now?

The U.K. goth scene is desperate, back stabbing and almost non-existent. We only concern ourselves with our own goals. Loyalty between the newer breed of goth bands is appalling, and we decided to steer clear of showcases and all-day goth events solely for these reasons.

Were you satisfied with the way your Lp, AN EYE FOR THE MAIN CHANCE, came out? I think it's incredible.

Given our budget, and the inexperience of ourselves and those involved, then yes, we were lucky to end up with the album sounding the way it does — but our next album will make our first sound like a demo! We're almost finished.

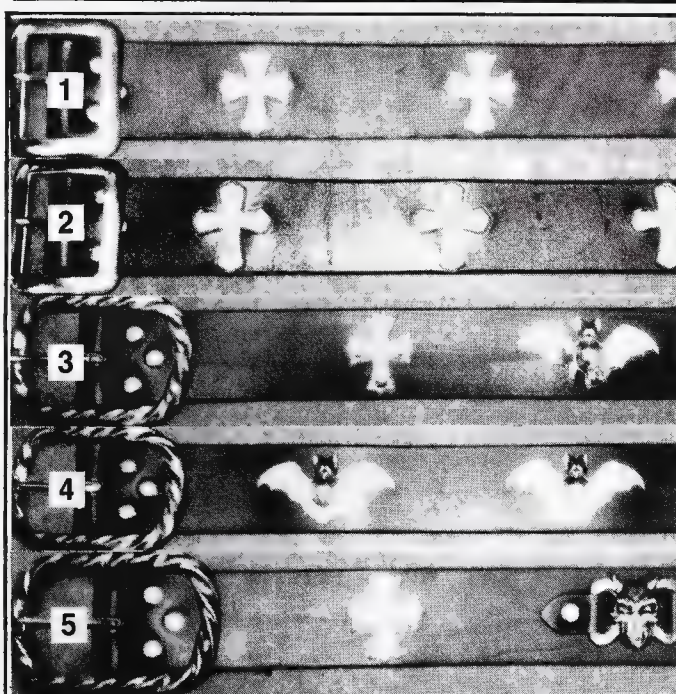
Your last single, "Adrenaline," was excellent as well.

Thanks, it was the best thing we have ever recorded in my opinion, but it's difficult for me to be objective.

Do you have any plans to tour the U.S. ever?

We would love to play in the States. After seeing the level of quality in the fanzines produced there, it makes us well aware that there is definitely a great deal of interest in goth in your country of which we would dearly like to be a part.

So watch our America — Rosetta Stone may be coming to your town very soon. In the meantime, you can write to them at: 31 Ivanhoe Rd., Aigburth, Liverpool L17 8XF, U.K.



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HELTER SKEITER

the gothic club from Los Angeles
photos by Fred Berger

On a blood-crazed night in Hollywood, Leo Van Rossen spys the Helter Skelter dance floor in search of sustenance.



Eagerly, Manuel ('the boy') and Shannon offer their long white necks to the nosferatu. "Take me! Take me!," is their cry and plea. They shudder as if passed by great danger.



The victim: John Koviak on the blood-stained floor of L.A. gothdom. "O fortunate youth, thy fate was sealed with a kiss."

Blood Countess

Whisper, now,
are the pale one sinking in the corner,
are you scared of me?
have me my piece, bleed my hair
your fingers are so stable with yours,
wrap the head slowly,
do you truly love me?
you will sleep with me tonight, yes,
better me than a man, my pearl
I take forced by necessity not pleasure alone.

Hanging from the ceiling
menstrual blood sliding
down the North Mirror
the smell makes me itch,
I inhale slowly and deeply,
letting the hunger rise again.

Sweet virgin,
sing to me of angels and break me,
wrapped in curtains, bound to the Great God
never had I heard such music,
you stole my sole that cold night,
naked you sat next to me in the carriage
your body cushioned by deep velvet,
burgandy has always been my colour,
my nannies let me punish naughty servant girls
until steaming burgandy fell to the floor,
stop shivering my pearl,
you haven't much time to feel the cold
the dogs are already running to taste your moist lips,
warmed honey smells especially strong to starved beasts,
when I meet you again in heaven
you will thank me.

You will all thank me
for saving you from impurity,
you and your sisters will welcome me
with flowers and kisses when we are reunited in Paradise.



Countess Elisabeth Bathory, luminary of the Austro-Hungarian nobility, and "Vampire Lady."

**TEXT AND PHOTOS BY FRED H. BERGER
POETRY BY LIZA MAINE SEYBOLD**

Think of it - a world without war, without murder, without rape - a world without men, a feminine paradise fit for the "Queen of the Damned." Such peace there would be if only the heat of male violence could be forever extinguished, if only the fury which lurks within the heart of every man were no more. Could womankind be saved from the evil of masculinity by the fanciful removal of the male beast, or would this somehow give rise to the strong, predatory female who in her lust and violence would be his very equal. Such an outcome, which is typically

the case in women's prison, would be much to the regret of the newly "liberated" passive female, who in time might even come to long for the return of the "extinct sex" as the newly liberated dominant female exercised her long-repressed masculine capacity for cruelty and sexual aggression.

This question is exploited and fully resolved with the release of the new Propaganda Video entitled BLOOD COUNTESS, the second cinematic venture by those same purveyors of the macabre who have thrust upon a timid world the dark chronicle of Propaganda Magazine. Starring in this all-female vampire film is Propaganda's own undead lovely, Tia Giles, who with all her daemonic intensity

has assumed the persona of the most sadistic mass-killer ever to run red with innocent blood - Countess Elisabeth Bathory. In her morbid desperation to remain young at any price, this 17th century Hungarian aristocrat orchestrated and participated in the torture and murder of 650 virgin girls, in whose blood she bathed nightly as if it were some magical elixir of youth. Her necro-maniacal lesbian atrocities are legend in the annals of gore, unmatched by the crimes of any man, crimes in which she was assisted by a crew of diabolical servant women who threw themselves whole-heartedly into their gruesome tasks. Her beautiful young victims were violated and mutilated in every conceivable way, with rivers of blood running from the Iron Maiden which was the ghastly centerpiece of Elisabeth's chamber of horrors.

Despite her cultivated femininity, there was a decidedly androgynous aspect to the Countess, from her contralto voice to her lean muscularity, and she often expressed the feeling that she was "male." And she was jealous of God Himself, the "Original Mass

Murderer," whom she sought to rival through unbridled terror and immortality. She was the product of a heavily inbred family afflicted with schizophrenia, and of an early education at the hands of a sadistic lesbian aunt, the combination of which gave rise to a character as megalomaniacal as Anne Rice's Akasha and as sexually inverted as Le Fanu's Carmilla, and more of a monster than either of them, for she was real and not a product of literary fiction. She was the "Vampire Lady of the Carpathians" whose name still inspires fear and awe in the mountains of eastern Hungary where her castle at Csejthe still stands, and where the torture devices of her dungeons are preserved in a small museum in Pistyan.

For the sake of art and the gothic aesthetic, BLOOD COUNTESS features no rivers of crimson gore, blood baths, or shrieking virgins at the mercy of the whip, the branding iron, and the knife. The dark romanticism of dominance and submission is the vehicle of choice in portraying the insatiable blood lust and sexual psychosis of Elisabeth Bathory.



Elisabeth's favorite flower was the iris, "its petals so like the satin of a woman's mouth."

The film represents her Ladyship's progression from lesbian fantasist to death-dealing vampire as the voice of a young woman speaks in verse of the passions and crimes of the Tigress of Csejthe. The soundtrack also features a melancholy duet sung by two women in Elisabeth's native tongue, German, the language of the Austro-Hungarian nobility. Performed with a piano accompaniment, this enchanted piece was written by the composer Mendelssohn, whose title "Der Tiefste Traum" (The Deepest Dream) befits the scene of a near-naked Countess lying on a coffin dreaming of nude goddesses and wood nymphs. Followed by a series of homoerotic seductions, this relatively tranquil opening is sharply contrasted by the closing scenes of bondage and blood-drinking which are accompanied by the manic delirium of the instrumental piece entitled "Lilith" by the group Foetus. Again, the title of the music befits the theme, Lilith being the original vampire and mother of all she-devils according to Hebrew demonology. In BLOOD COUNTESS witness is born to the degradation and death of beautiful maidens trapped by a highborn huntress whose path is strewn with fresh corpses, shallow graves, and skeletal remains.

The savagery of Elisabeth Bathory was unmitigated by her fanatic devotion to the Virgin Mary, the Mother Goddess and ruling Queen of Heaven, whom, if she could, she would have placed on a throne even loftier than that of the Almighty. And although her victims were exclusively female, she was motivated by her hatred of the male animal, so much so that she cast herself in the mold of that horrible creature in order to defeat him at his own monstrous game. She loved those whom she killed, especially those of noble birth, seeing to it that they received "Christian burials" whenever possible, and offering prayers and flowers at mournful graveside vigils. And with equal ardor she dispatched magnificent white horses in sacrificial rites to the Spirit of Time, whom she hoped would spare her the ravages of age and death.

When her Ladyship was finally brought before the court of male justice, after a 7-year murder spree, she would gloat over the fact that the men who confiscated her famous Iron Maiden and spiked cage melted them down to make guns, claiming with great satisfaction that "women have seldom provoked wars." Although BLOOD COUNTESS ends at the height of her orgasmic rampage, she was in fact convicted of witchcraft, mass murder, and vampirism. But owing to the privilege of

her rank, she was merely sentenced to life imprisonment in Csejthe Castle; she died just three years later of influenza. Her four female co-defendants, all of common birth, were burnt at the stake. Male justice had prevailed, the guns went to war, and the dominant female was once again subjugated 'til that glorious future when the world will be free at last from the evil of male violence. Oh happy day; the Goddess cometh - and the Vampire Lady, like the Queen of the Damned, shall not be very far behind.

Requiem In White

Propaganda Video No. 2 also features two haunting and quite exquisite music videos from the retromantic Requiem In White, New York City's own renegade Rosicrucians, who in their antiquarian attire and pursuit of the mythical Ideal would seem very much at home in some late 19th century Parisian opium den frequented by Symbolist artists and poets. The group is fronted by a chanteuse of the Botticelli mold of angelic grace and beauty, whose near operatic vocals seem to derive from a sublime source, perhaps the very font whence did the Sirens of Homer's Odyssey acquire their enchanted gift of song. The Requiem videos are beautifully filmed with dreamlike dissolves and double-exposures and Lisa enveloped in clouds, wind, and rain - the band splintered and crosshatched in fields of grain like ghostly spirits of harvest. The songs herein performed are "Want" and "Santonin Kiss," both of which seem to tell of some hidden knowledge; surely there are more things between heaven and earth than one dares to dream of.

The Shroud

Following Requiem In White are two music videos from The Shroud, those brooding denizens of the California gothic netherworld, whose bewitching vocalist, Eva, emerges like a banshee out of the night to complete this cinematic triumvirate of fearsome femininity. The videos featured are the watery grave of "Ophelia," with drowning scenes and water lilies, and "Spectre," an ode to the succubus, that dreadful she-devil which forces itself upon men as they slumber.

Elisabeth, Lisa, Eva - daughters of darkness one and all, descended from the primordial mothers of all evil - Lilith, Pandora, and Eve - who endow this second edition of Propaganda Video with a sinister womanly charm

sure to catch in the throat of the male beast, like the proverbial apple in the throat of Adam. ☠

Footnote: For more information on the life of Elisabeth Bathory, refer to the "Bride of Darkness" article in Propaganda Magazine Issue No. 15. For more about THE SHROUD refer to pages 32 and 33 of this issue. And see the REQUIEM IN WHITE advertisement on page 39 of this issue for further info.

VIDEO ORDERING INFORMATION

Propaganda Video No. 2 has a total running time of approximately 30 minutes, and is available in VHS stereo format. The mail-order cost, which includes postage and handling, is \$16.95. Refer to the SANCTUARY MUSIC SALES ad on page 52 for complete details. Video No. 1, featuring witch burnings and John Koviak, is also available for \$16.95.



Photos by Fred Berger

Nectar of virgins for a Blood Countess.

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THE SHROUD

Article by Paul Hart

Photos by A.K. Davey



Eva of The Shroud: she walks in silence through a tapestry of sound.

A forest shrouded in silken mist. A dark castle silhouetted against a crimson twilight. A fair maiden draped in a flowing gown and veil. These are some of the images conjured by the medieval majesty of the music of The Shroud. Like the ever-changing pastel colors and shades of the sunset, The Shroud has evolved over the years into one of contemporary music's more mystical and sullen bands.

The band was originally conceived back in 1988 as a theatrical piece based on Anne Rice's novel "Interview With The Vampire." Known then as the Shoudettes, the project evolved into an actual band fronted by three girls — Eva, Lucia and Christabelle — sort of the Supremes of the Goth set. They were a campy, "Rocky Horror"-style death rock outfit. The Shroudettes also appeared in a low budget Sci-fi film called "The Bionaut." They became well-known in California (their base being Fresno) as a cross between "superheroines and comic book vampires" — as lead singer Eva puts it.

As time went on, however, and the spectral colors of the evening transformed into darker shades of gray, Eva and the other main songwriters, Raven and Misha, saw the need to evolve into something more serious and less campy. The lineup was revamped and the Shroudettes shed their chrysalis to emerge as the beautifully somber The Shroud. This new ensemble released a truly haunting cassette, **DROWNING DREAMS**. The imagery is lush and mystical. Eva sees this new incarnation of the band as the logical evolution of their interests and emotions.

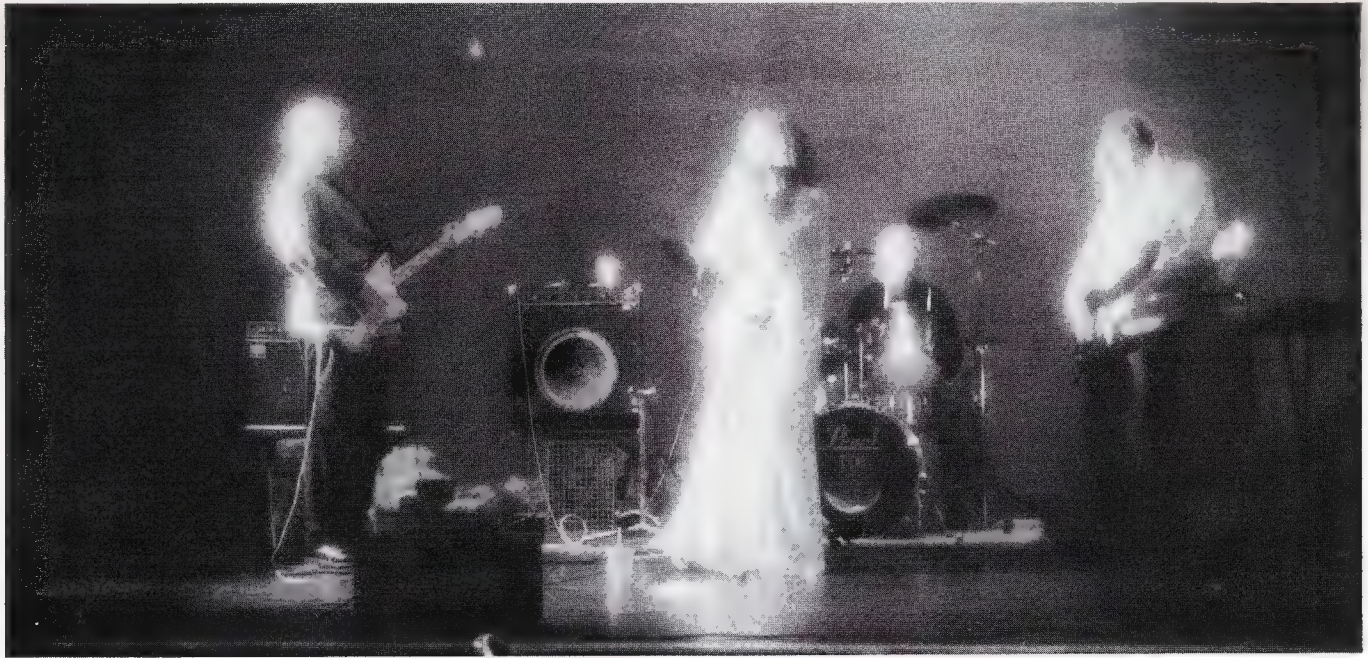
"We wanted to express a much broader scope of ideas and feelings," she explains. "As the Shroudettes, we were too confined to the whole Vampire Lestat imagery. We wanted to

expand our horizons and start incorporating some of our other influences, such as Gothic and Victorian literature, the symbolism of the alchemical arts, and mysticism of the medieval Christian heresies. As a whole, we wanted to have a more mystical and medieval outlook. This took us down a more serious path to our music and performing — one that's more concerned with content than image."

Even the name The Shroud suggests this new approach the band has undertaken. "Metaphorically, the shroud is a veil between the worlds," says Eva, "a wrapping of flesh that clouds our vision, obstructing a clear perception of either state of being. It acts as a screen, only letting in that which we already know, and must be passed through in order to see anything beyond. I've always been intrigued with the word shroud as a metaphor."

Eva and her bandmates have become quite a sensation on the west coast. Their tape **DROWNING DREAMS** is also doing very well in other parts of the country. They are presently working on a full studio album to be released as a CD. The evolution of their sound will continue in this more eclectic and intelligent direction. The base of the band's musical influences is extremely broad as well. They enjoy listening to everything from the classics such as Chopin and Stravinsky to brooding blues-based rock like the Doors and Led Zeppelin to the dark, somber sounds of the Cocteau Twins and the Sisters Of Mercy. These influences make for a truly unique mix of textures. Ultimately, however, Eva considers her own personal emotions as the main influence on the lyrics and music she writes.

"I tend to write about my own feelings and emotions, in



Hauntingly beautiful melodies emanate from The Shroud.

order to share them with the audience," she says. "Though the settings and situations may change — using different places and times as back drops — the songs still basically reflect my personal emotions. It's very important for me to share my feelings because I believe that too many people close themselves off to others. I think this is why people tend to be leary of each other. Sometimes it's not easy to open up. I have a lot of psychological barriers myself, but that's all the more reason to do what I'm doing."

This emotional outpouring is quite evident in many of The Shroud's songs, such as "Death's Too Late," "When Flowers Fall" and "Ophelia." The character Ophelia is depicted on the cover of the **DROWNING DREAMS** cassette as a girl in flowing robes sinking into the depths of a murky pond.

Eva sees this indulgence in the murky side of musical expression as a natural consequence of the times we live in.

"Obsession with darkness and mysticism usually rises towards the end of every century," Eva explains. "We saw

this at the end of the 19th century with the English novelists and French poets. Because the end of this century is also the end of the millennium, this dark, Gothic leaning should be even that much more pronounced in the years to come."

May a dark Shroud descend on us all.

For information on how to obtain The Shroud's **DROWNING DREAMS** cassette and other releases, please send a s.a.s.e. to: The Shroud, P.O. Box 25112, Fresno, CA. 93729

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"**Oh** Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph on Earth. These loathsome parasites who cling to the cross, the cloth and the skin. Soaked in the blood of men, but not the body of Christ. This is heresy."

So it says in the lyrics of the Christian Death song "This Is Heresy." Their interpretation is crucial if one is to understand the world view of the band's leader and guiding light — Valor. For as long as he can remember, the hypocrisies of the world's major religions have baffled and enraged him. Christian Death itself was created back in 1981 as a rebellion against the tyrannies of organized religion. The band became a vehicle for its members to vent their sentiment, and in doing so built a cult following of like-minded fans within the darkest corridors of the alternative rock pantheon.

Albums like **THEATRE OF PAIN** ('82), **CATASTROPHE BALLET** ('84), **ASHES** ('85), **ATROCITIES** ('86), **THE SCRIPTURES** ('87), **THE HERETICS** (Live '89), and **SEX & DRUGS & JESUS CHRIST** ('90) all revel in the hypothesis of religion as oppression — each having a slightly different spin on the subject. Valor is quick to point out, however, that Christianity and the other great religions are not in and of themselves inherently corrupt or evil, but it's the way they have been practiced that is.

"A lot of people have said that we are anti-Christian or satanic because of what we sing about and what we've named the band," retorts Valor. "We are not in any way against the teachings of Christ. What we are against is how opportunists through the ages have used his name and his teachings to exploit and oppress others. No practitioner of a religion has the right to judge someone else, because religions themselves decree that only God can render judgement. So it's very hypocritical to judge others. Our songs aren't negative, they only seem that way because we attack those who cast dispersions on the rest of us. The name Christian Death refers to the death of the Christian god — Jesus himself. He died for those who believe in him. It is in no way meant to denigrate."

Valor and the other members of the band have spent the better part of the last ten years defending themselves because of their seemingly blasphemous use of religious symbolism both in their lyrics and on their album covers. The **SEX & DRUGS & JESUS CHRIST** Lp was banned in many countries for depicting Christ shooting himself up with heroin on the cover.

"I look at such depictions as art," says Valor. "All art-forms are representations of ideas. That particular cover was just a photographic sculpture of society's contradictions, the contradiction of good and evil within society."

Christian Death albums are replete with such symbols. Valor regards each release as a total artform. Not only is the music very symbolic, but the album jackets themselves are meticulously adorned with lavish iconography. Very often posters and booklets are included to enhance the imagery. Valor is a wellspring of knowledge when it comes to all world religions, which probably explains the wealth of material that flows from his poisonous pen.

"I'm interested in everything from Zoroastrianism to Chris-

CHRISTIAN

DEATH

BY MARIA BLOUNT



Zalia C.

Valor, the guiding light of Christian Death.

tianity to Gnosticism," says Valor. "I've incorporated a little bit of everything into my belief system. Nothing, however, can be proven until we're dead. That's why I object to people behaving as though they have the absolute truth. They point to scripture as proof, but even that stuff was written by mere ordinary men."

The absolute truth as far as Christian Death is concerned is their ability to survive various musical trends and several personnel changes. Two very significant original members have since moved on to create successful projects of their own. Rozz Williams left the band in 1985 and is now fronting the popular Shadow Project based in L.A., where the original Christian Death was formed. Gitane Demone left Christian Death in 1990, and she's making quite an impact overseas as



Maitri, Valor and Justine cling to their undying faith.

a solo artist. But Valor has shown time and time again that he has an uncanny ability to replace great talent with great talent. He has recently filled several voids within the band with excellent, classically-trained musicians. Backing up

Valor's vocal duties and guitar work are Maitri on bass, Adam E. on guitar, Justine Armatige on keyboards, and Chris Nobling on drums. The London-based band is now working on a new album, **THE BEAUTY OF TEMPTATION**, scheduled to be released in March '93. They are also in the midst of completing a tour of Europe and the U.S. (Check your local listings.) In the meantime, Christian Death has released a compilation Lp of their singles called **JESUS POINTS THE BONE AT YOU**. Songs include the aforementioned "This Is Heresy," along with long-time cult favorites, "Believers Of The Unpure" and "Church Of No Return."

"The album is a walk through my apocalyptic vision of the future," warns Valor. "Subjects range from the AIDS disaster to environmental catastrophes to religious holocausts."

Obviously, Valor has never been one to shy away from the darkside of human existence. Christian Death delivers these doomy topics with their usual caustic instrumental prowess. Yes, there's still plenty of life in Christian Death. **END**



TERRORNACHT!

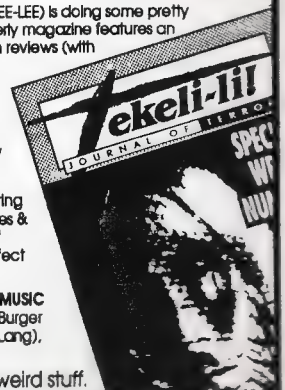
By any other name, **Tekeli-III** (pronounced TEK-ah-LEE-LEE) is doing some pretty weird stuff. Subtitled the **Journal of Terror**, this quarterly magazine features an eclectic mix of fiction, commentary, art, poetry, film reviews (with moviemaker interviews), comics and criticism, all examining aspects of the horror genre usually overlooked by the mainstream magazines. Each issue devotes special emphasis on the masters of horror fiction and art. And we also check out some neat stuff like comics, role playing games, music, TV & film which cater to the horror crowd.

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Laibach

by Scott Crawford



To the band Laibach, nothing is more important than the folkland.

Nineteen ninety-two was a banner year for the Slovenian industrial fascists known as Laibach. The group who have given us such epic, grandiose dancefloor anthems as "Life Is Life," "Die Liebe," and "Drzava," as well as mind-blowing renditions of Queen's "One Vision," the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy For The Devil," and the Beatles' "Let It Be" are back with a new album and tour, and an outstanding book about the Slovenian art collective they helped found, "Neue Slovenisch Kunst (New Slovenian Art)". Quite a year, indeed!

The new Lp, **KAPITAL**, has all of what you've come to expect from Laibach: thundering, cascading horns, and a dramatic Teutonically-inspired choir, juxtaposed against a sinister, infectious dance beat and sub-basement level vocals often reminiscent of your worst (or best) nightmare, combining to create an audio simulation of the military parade of the future. However, **KAPITAL** expands on the musical ground they've already tread by introducing a new element to their music — a ghettoized, hard-edge hip-hop sound, similar at times to some recent techno and house music, Nitzer Ebb, and oddly enough, Public Enemy. The Berlin Wall has fallen, Communism has crumbled, and the Westernization of Eastern Europe is in full swing. Have Laibach succumbed to this trend? Certainly not! Like a force of nature, Laibach have adapted, first taking in new information and calculating their best uses for it, then twisting and subverting it, and finally emerging from this process a stronger musical entity. As

they have done so often in the past, Laibach have merely appropriated another slice of pop culture and manipulated it to suit their own purposes.

And what exactly is the purpose of Laibach's maniacally oppressive sound? What is Laibach trying to accomplish through their music? The lead singer (no names; the members prefer to remain anonymous) does not mince words. "Laibach is just one facet of an artistic collective and consciousness-raising movement that grew out of Slovenia's fight for freedom from the communist leaders in Belgrade [the capital of Yugoslavia, of which Slovenia was a "captive" republic]. Our music is the crystalization of this movement and its ideals. Music is meant to create order out of chaos. We reject the degenerate, avant-garde, chaotic primitivism of groups such as Throbbing Gristle and Psychic TV, who many people have wrongly compared us with. Our music is very pragmatic, based in reality and life, and has definite stated goals."

Let the music world tremble. And on **KAPITAL**, the assault begins with "Decade Null," as the roar of a WWII German Heinkel bomber mixes with a pulsating rhythm that will leave shrapnel holes in your skull. For the next 78 minutes of the album, the Laibach forces march on like an unstoppable juggernaut. Selections like "White Law," "Everlasting Union," "Wirtschaft Ist Tot" and "Entartete Welt (The Discovery of the North Pole)" are powerful reminders of the sheer force

of Laibach's convictions and musical prowess.

Laibach's live performances of the new material are equally as stunning. The band members man their assigned positions on stage with the urgency of front line warriors. The symbolist stage props and visuals on screen lend to an ominously totalitarian atmosphere. At a recent show, Laibach's powerful performance so impressed a friend of mine, that he loudly proclaimed — "I feel like I've just given birth to the final solution." Indeed, Laibach's live shows have all the trappings of a militaristic political rally. This is not at all by accident.

"Politics is the highest form of popular culture," says Laibach. "And we who create the contemporary European pop culture consider ourselves politicians. Our shows are the way they are because art and totalitarianism are not mutually exclusive. We enjoy the symbolism; it is the spearhead of our message."

Laibach is actually just one of the spearheads in the Slovenian art-collective movement known as Neue Slovenische Kunst (NSK). The movement also includes a group of architects called the Builders, two theater troupes — Scipion Nasice Sisters Theater and Cosmokinetic Theater Red Pilot, and a curious artists collective known as Irwin. Irwin is much



like Laibach in that they create art by committee. No single member takes credit for any particular piece of art. In fact, all pieces are signed simply IRWIN. The mixed-media paintings this group produces are bold and stark, combining spartan socialist realism with apocalyptic religious imagery. Like Laibach's music, the artwork celebrates Slovenian culture and folklore. Also creating impressive works of art is an NSK splinter group known as New Collectivism. Their medium of choice is the propaganda poster. They take actual posters from such totalitarian sources as Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia, and alter them slightly to suit the group's purposes. The most noteworthy example is the 1987 Day Of Youth poster which was modeled after Nazi artist Richard Klein's famous work of the 1930's.

Just released is an incredible book documenting all the work by the various groups in NSK. Available through AMOK Books, this leatherbound, lavishly illustrated collector's item meticulously documents what the movement has produced and where it is heading. To Laibach and the other groups, propaganda is art, and art is the celebration of one's ideals and culture.

"Art must reflect tradition," says Laibach. "We present our ideas in this forum [music and painting] because it most immediately effects the younger members of society. The foundation and support for the national spirit must be discovered within the youth. Tradition is a product of a thousand years of culture and cannot be erased in a short span of time. It cannot be erased by fads and popular, short-lived trends — though some may try. Nation and tradition are the only worthy causes for which people should die and cultures survive. NSK is acutely conscious of this when it creates art."

Needless to say, this strident Slovene nationalism that NSK promoted was frowned upon by the Marxist government of Yugoslavia when the movement first took shape in the early '80s. The group was constantly being harassed and intimidated by government authorities and operatives. But through the sheer determination of their will, and a ground-



Fred Berger

All hail Laibach at the Limelight in NYC.

swell of popular support, NSK persevered. Nationalism in all of Eastern Europe eventually threw off the yolk of Bolshevik oppression, and along with the newly liberated peoples of the region, Laibach spread their wings of cultural pride. The result has been several powerful and provocative recordings. None stray very far in sentiment from the manifesto set forth by NSK on May 25th 1986.

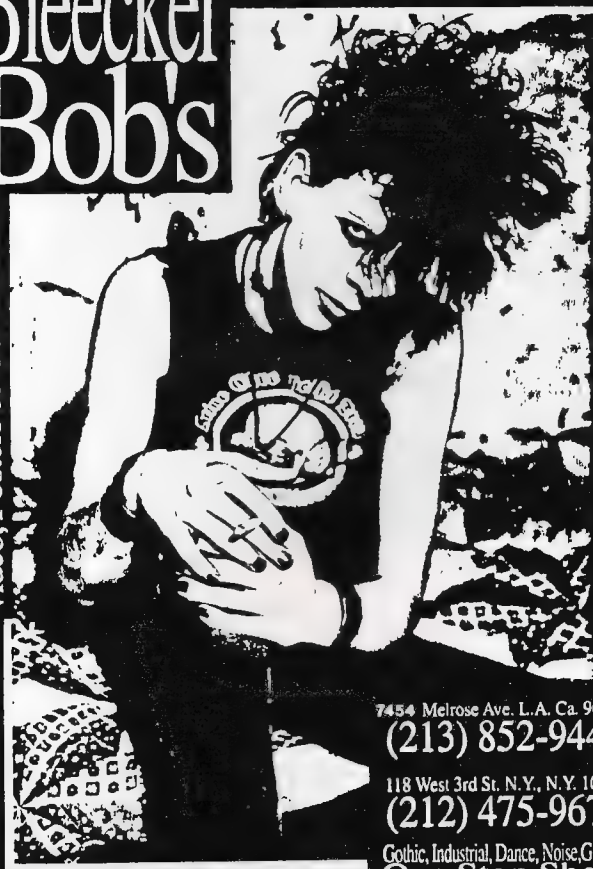
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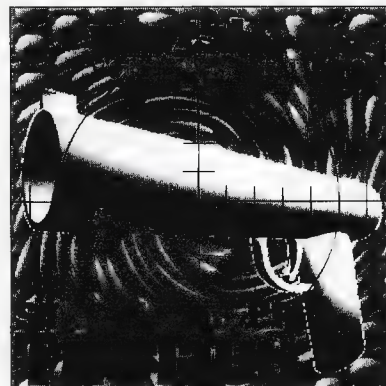
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MOSAIC X KISSES

GODFLESH

INTERVIEW BY RENE'

STRENGTH
THROUGH PURITY



Ian Tilton

"I didn't hear voices. It was a conscious decision on my part. It was a power thing. I simply acted on my fantasies."

— Mass Murderer Henry Lee Lucas, subject of the documentary "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer."

With this quote, the industrial-thrash terrorists Godflesh open their song "Streetcleaner," the title track off their 1990 debut album. Understand the sentiment behind the quote and you understand the motivation and driving force behind Godflesh.

"We're all about unrelenting power," says vocalist/guitarist Justin Broadrick of the band's music. "I'm very much into the extremes of music and philosophy. I have a strange admiration for people like Henry Lucas, who are unencumbered by morality or social constraints. Maybe that's way I identify so much with Ridley Scott's "Alien." It was a creature without remorse and of pure purpose — so focused, so refined, so directed... wow, so pure."

The fact that the second Godflesh Lp is called **PURE** is no coincidence. Justin Broadrick sees purity as a strength, and uses this notion to light the fire beneath the oppressive and totalitarian sound of Godflesh. The music this band creates is beyond heavy — it is indeed oppressive. And it's an oppression generated by the band's nihilistic and misanthropic outlook on humanity and the world.

"I don't have a very optimistic view of humanity," admits Justin. "Eighty percent of it is shit, and as a whole, mankind is very weak and without any kind of purpose. Once in awhile,

people need to be crushed emotionally and intellectually to be reminded of reality. That's the basic purpose of our music, to shock everyone back into the real world, and to how lousy it is."

With songs like "Wound," "Mighty Trust Killer" and "Like Rats," it's easy to understand why many critics have called the Godflesh sound "music for the apocalypse." The cover of their first album, **STREETCLEANER**, depicts dozens of people nailed to crosses. Justin and his long-time friend G. Christian Green, the band's bassist, have always shared this fatalistic vision. This maniacal world view manifests itself in the band's music — which has the industrial strength of Ministry and the doom-laden metal crunch of early Black Sabbath. In fact, the band emerged from the same soot-choked northern English city as Sabbath — Birmingham. Justin's whole background consists of the kind of factors that would lead him inevitably to the path he has chosen in life. His parents were mere teenagers when they raised him on a drug-infested commune in the early seventies. His father was a heroin addict who tried to kill both Justin and his mother with drug overdoses. The people on the commune listened to the extremes of the psychedelic rock underground. Justine admits these were contributing factors to who he is today. Though he vehemently avoids hard drugs, he smokes copious amounts of pot to heighten his awareness — "mostly of fear and paranoia," he proclaims. His tastes in music were profoundly molded by the people who influenced him when he was very young. He was



Robert, Justin and "Benny" of Godflesh.

exposed to a wide range of musical styles from Hendrix, Sabbath and Led Zeppelin to Swans and Throbbing Gristle. Thus, his music is an unclassifiable amalgam of them all — and he prefers it that way.

"I don't want people to be able to pigeonhole us," says Justin. "We like drawing all kinds of fans. Our only intent is to play what we like and to play what we feel [which happens to be a lot of anger]. Too many bands these days actually want to be categorized because of commercial considerations. Even the bands on our label, Earache, all try to fall into that so-called "grindcore/death metal" category. It's all getting so contrived and so boring — the same old riffs, the same old gimmicks. We did that shit years ago with Napalm Death. [Justin played drums for them on their '85 debut album, *SCUM*.] Even they have become stagnant and stale now. I believe music should be dynamic — ever changing. Though we've kept a basic consistent style, *PURE* is very different from *STREETCLEANER*, and our next album will move in still another direction. In fact, I can't even listen to the old stuff anymore."

Between *STREETCLEANER* and *PURE* was the *SLAVE-STATE* Ep, which signaled the transition between the two styles. Godflesh now is more sample oriented in the vein of Skinny Puppy, whom they toured with here in the States recently. For the *PURE* album and tour, Justin and Christian "Benny" Green recruited Robert Hampson, former guitarist for the heavy, psychedelia-edged outfit, Loop. Apparently, he'll fit in just fine when you consider what he said in a recent interview: "I find a lot of beauty in violence. It can be constructive as well as destructive." Hmm, seems to jibe perfectly with Justin's empathy with serial killers.

Verbal sentiments aside, beyond the band's penchant for incorporating hatred and violence in their music, the boys are quite amiable in person. Perhaps the music they play serves as such a powerful release that it funnels all their

aggression and anger right out of their systems.

"That's exactly it," agrees Justin. "I wouldn't know what to do without my music. I'm almost afraid to think about it. I'd either be dead or doing the killing. Ha ha! That's why our music is the way it is — huge, monstrous."

Justin sums up this reasoning by explaining where the name Godflesh came from. "I heard someone once say that 'music is the voice of God.' In that sense, it's something that can get inside of you and move you spiritually on a communication level. The word God conjures something immense and inconceivable. The 'flesh' part is what effects you on a physical level. Our music is loud and destructive. I know Godflesh is the American Indian term for peyote, but that really is kind of a coincidence. It's a coincidence that suits me just fine though." [...as Justin passes the joint.]

Godflesh are as awe-inspiring as their namesake. And because they believe in musical self-destruction and reinvention, what they will come up with next is completely unpredictable. Ironically, self-destruction may be the key to their survival.

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FOETUS

Interview
by
Scott Crawford



Michele Taylor

In order to keep one step ahead of the authorities, criminals and terrorists have been known to frequently change their aliases. With this tactic as a cover, they can blend in with any given setting or situation. Thus is the case with musical terrorist Jim Thirlwell, 33. For years he's been making guerilla-style, hit-and-run attacks on an unsuspecting record-buying public, only to quickly submerge again into the cultural underground using a different moniker. A definite pattern, however, has been developing to Mr. Thirlwell's frequent name changes and musical incarnations. Using some good old-fashioned, detective footwork, we were able to fol-

low his trail of musical misdeeds and track him down.

Most commonly, he goes under the pseudonym Foetus Inc. This is the name he uses when he records as a solo artist and produces some of his most diabolical releases. Early incarnations of this Foetus trademark included the names You've Got Foetus On Your Breath and Scraping Foetus Off The Wheel. During this time, he lived in London — having made the trans-global trek from his native Australia at the tender age of 18 — and released his first assault on the public with the "OKFM / Spite In Your Face" single. Later came the DEAF Lp, where he juxtaposed sampled African

tribal chanting against the Popeye theme song. A musical terrorist with a sardonic sense of humor was born.

"You can imbue a sense of dread and horror to anything if you juxtapose it to something that is associated with such an orientation," explains Jim, the man of a thousand musical faces. "A lot of my early work relied heavily on that technique. Even today I make heavy use of playing on people's sense of association."

An effective terrorist knows the value of being able to terrorize and toy with people on a rational and irrational level. As Jim Thirlwell developed and honed his craft, he was able to apply his tool of juxtaposition more effectively using more advanced electronic and recording techniques. On the **NAIL** Lp, he drops Greig's "Hall Of The Mountain King" into the middle of "Throne Of Agony," a song about mercy killing. Jim's instrumentation and studio effects also became much more proficient with each successive release, including the **BEDROCK** and **RAMROD** Eps, which he recorded after having made the move to New York City. Terrorists also have to keep changing their location. His musical style was now at its most dangerous, some would even say demonic. How could one man create so much anarchy and mass confusion. Foetus Inc. recordings became incredibly complex and instrumentally diverse. Was Jim Thirlwell really the only one behind the myriad of instruments used on his records?

"Actually, the instrument I'm most adept at is the studio itself," says Jim. "I'll pick up a saxophone or a violin or whatever, and I'll only learn to play the rudimentary parts I need for that specific piece. Other than that, it's all studio manipulation and illusion. It's amazing what you can do with sampling these days. However, I have become somewhat proficient with certain instruments just out of necessity."

One man was thus able to become a veritable orchestra, and nowhere is this talent demonstrated more acutely than on the 1988 Lp, **THAW**, which contains his most recognized song to that date, "English Faggot," about a series of prank phone calls he had received. Probably the best chronicle of the progression of the Foetus sound is the **SINK** compilation Lp of 1990. It contains a collection of previously released singles, B-sides and unreleased gems, including "Lilith" — a foreboding instrumental masterpiece that ultimately proves an evil genius is at work.

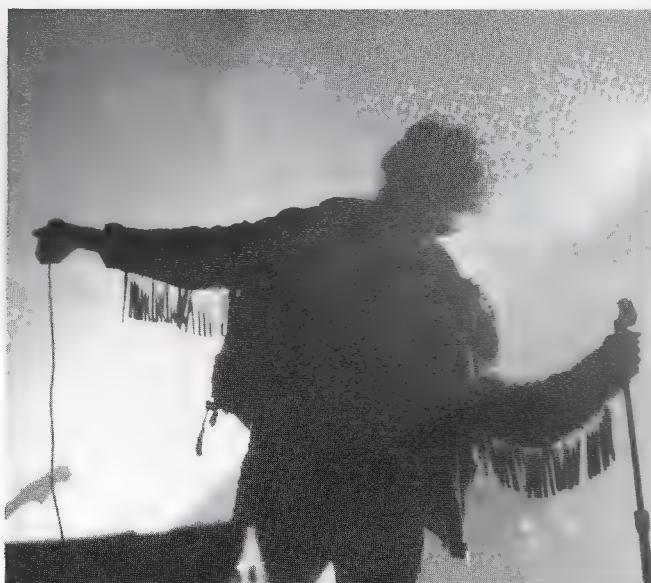
Because Jim is such a master at studio techniques, his services have been sought after by many other recording artists — whether it be as a producer or as a collaborator in a side project. It is here where Jim not only makes the most varied use of his talents, but also makes the most functional use of his aliases.

"Even with the name Foetus itself, I've always seen fit to vary it as the content of my music changed," says Jim referring to the early variants of Foetus. "In fact, the first single, 'OKFM' was credited to Phillip And His Foetus Vibrations. When I started working on other projects and collaborations, however, I felt that any use of the name Foetus at all was inappropriate. Foetus had its own identity and I didn't want to corrupt it. Foetus became an entity unto itself, and I wanted it to represent my work as a solo artist only."

Jim "Foetus" Thirlwell saw collaboration with like-minded others as the perfect opportunity to express his many musical personalities. One such personality manifested itself as the pseudonym Clint Ruin, which he used in his projects with Lydia Lunch — the infamous **STINKFIST** Ep and the more recent **DON'T FEAR THE REAPER** Ep. As Clint Ruin, he also produced her latest album, **SHOTGUN WEDDING**. Jim and Lydia used to be romantically involved, and this torrid affair was documented in the N.Y.C. underground film classic, "Right Side Of My Brain" by Richard Kern.

"Lydia and I have always had a great working relationship," says Jim. "**DON'T FEAR THE REAPER** [a cover of the old Blue Oyster Cult classic] was something we both felt needed to be done because of all the people who were dying around us. It was very relevant. We basically have the same world view and tastes, which is something I look for in people I work with. Whatever project I'm involved with, I have to find it interesting."

Jim has also worked with singer Marc Almond on a one time project called **Flesh Volcano**. Along with Swiss super-producer Roli Mosimann (Swans, Young Gods), he created the



Fred Berger

Jim recreates the Foetus sound in concert.

entity known as Wiseblood, which produced two Lps, **DIRT-DISH** and **PEDAL TO THE METAL** — and two singles.

"The premise of Wiseblood was to express Roli's and my impressions of life in New York City," explains Jim. "Both of us came from other places, so we had unique perspectives on it. Roli worked on the engineering and I did the instrumentation. It took us so long to complete because we both had so many other projects going."

Another totally separate entity that Jim became involved with was **Steroid Maximus**. This collaboration with the likes of Don Fleming and Raymond Watts became the perfect outlet for Jim's increasing interest in epic instrumental pieces. He had been doing quite a bit of instrumental work with Foetus, but saw **Steroid Maximus** as a more appropriate vehicle to go all out on that type of music.

"First of all, because it was a collaborative effort, I didn't want to involve the Foetus name. Anyway, Foetus albums were getting increasingly instrumental, and I felt it was losing its identity. So in the future, I want to keep Foetus more vocal oriented, and use most of my instrumental material for **Steroid Maximus**."

The result so far has been two monstrosously powerful S.M. Lps — **QUILOMBO** and **GONDWANALAND** — the latter being almost two hours of soul-stomping, industrial thunder.

"By splitting my work up in that fashion between Foetus and **Steroid Maximus**," adds Jim, "I could concentrate on one musical identity at a time — and people wouldn't be prone to having preconceptions about either."

Being involved with all these collaborations does have a down side, however. Jim has had to put a lot of his own projects on hold. This modern-day renaissance man is an ardent workaholic, so despite his involvement with so many joint efforts, he's amassed a huge backlog of his own material that he'd like to get out. Recently, he released a colossal triple-set live Lp with his band Foetus In Excelsius **Corruptus Deluxe** — the live incarnation of the Foetus recordings. Members include former Swans Norm Westerberg and Al Kizys, and keyboardist Dave Ouimet from Cop Shoot Cop.

"I want to concentrate more on Foetus for the foreseeable future," reveals Jim. "The last couple of years have been absolutely ridiculous. I haven't been able to get anything done concerning Foetus until very recently. I'd like to trim down on all the collaborations and name changes for awhile."

Could this long-time musical chameleon / terrorist be going straight? For the first time in four years, Foetus will be putting out a full studio Lp, to be released at the end of '92. But don't count on Mr. Thirlwell mellowing out, he says the new release will "rear its ugly head and take a bit out of the blase' music scene."

THE END

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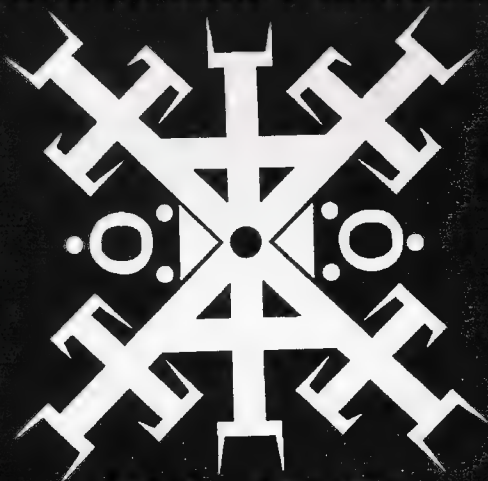
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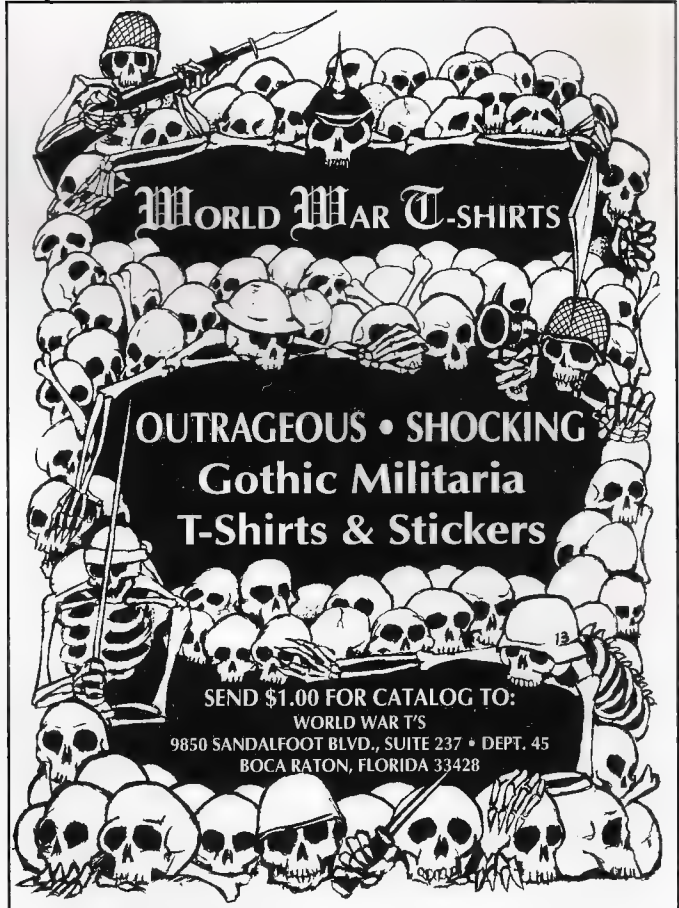
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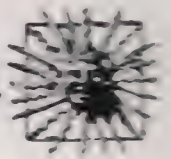
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The God Of Death



STORY BY STEFANIE ARENTS

PHOTOS BY FRED BERGER



model: Stephen Rae

A masked Aztec priest prepares a victim for sacrifice to the god Huitzilopochtli.

The great god Huitzilopochtli (*Wee-tsee-loh-pohch-tlee*), center of the Aztec Indian universe, god of gods, the Zeus of the Aztec dieties. For him, and for him alone, did the powerful Aztec civilization exist.

The Aztec religion was at the center of their social, political, commercial and military orders. A class of powerful priests controlled every aspect of Aztec life. They were the henchmen in the cult of Huitzilopochtli, the god of war and the sun. For it was Huitzilopochtli who allowed the Aztecs to dominate the lands of southwestern North America. It was Huitzilopochtli who allowed the sun to rise, the crops to grow and the Aztec civilization to thrive. The Aztec priests believed that the dawn of each day was an epic struggle between the forces of darkness and their champion god, the god of the sun. In order to insure that the sun would rise each morning, Huitzilopochtli had to be kept strong and well nourished. The source of this nourishment, they believed, had to be human blood or what they called *chalchiuatl*, "life's precious liquid." Because Huitzilopochtli was also their god of war, this "precious liquid" had to come from the captured warriors of neighboring tribes. Thus war and conquest became the religious obligation of the Aztec empire, and it was carried out with relentless religious fervor. The Aztecs believed that offering these captured warriors as human sacrifices to Huitzilopochtli would sustain him in his daily struggle against the night and all other enemies of the empire.

The Aztecs built huge pyramid-style structures as temples to their gods. Each god required special ceremonies, prayers and sacrifices on specific occasions during the year. No occasion was more sacred to the Aztecs than the one honoring

Huitzilopochtli. The temple to him was a truly magnificent edifice at the center of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan — meaning center of the world. The altars and steps of this structure ran red with the blood of thousands upon thousands of human sacrifices annually. During the inaugurating festivities of King Ahuitzotl, probably the most warlike of all the Aztec rulers, no less than 80,000 prisoners were sacrificed. It was a holocaust of unequalled proportions. The bravest prisoners of war would first be paraded past a royal reviewing stand. High priests dressed in elaborate masks and costumes would lead the procession. Each prisoner would be surrounded by four beautiful girls known as ceremonial maidens, who would throw flowers at his feet. This procession then lead up the steps of the giant pyramid to a sacrificial altar where the priests performed ceremonial rites, which ended in the priests cutting out the hearts of the victims and offering them to the great god Huitzilopochtli. Aztec warriors would then eat the flesh of the victims to acquire their bravery and cunning.

This carnage continued for hundreds of years until a band of Spanish explorers and conquistadors stumbled upon the shores of this mystical land. The giant Spanish galleons profoundly amazed the villagers of the coastal enclaves of the empire. Word quickly spread to the capital that "floating temples with great wings" were spotted upon the sea. Aztec legend had foretold of a great ancient Aztec hero/deity returning from the sea — "a plumed serpent" — Quetzalcoatl. When Hernan Cortes and his men proceeded inland towards the capital city atop their mighty stallions, he found himself being worshipped by the Aztecs as that hero god. The year



model: Tammy Julian

A ceremonial maiden leads a procession to the sacrificial altar.

was 1519, and the Aztec empire was at its zenith. Relations between the Spaniards and the Aztecs quickly soured, however; and when Cortes attempted to imprison the then ruler, Montezuma, all hell broke loose. Though the Spaniards had guns and horses to their advantage, they were hopelessly outnumbered. To their surprise and delight, however, tens of thousands of people from captive Indian tribes joined their struggle. The brutal Aztec subjugation of the neighboring tribes had come back to haunt them. With his Indian allies and band of conquistadors, Cortes took the offensive against the valiant Aztec armies. After a year of savage fighting, the once grand capital city of Tenochtitlan lay in ruins. The empire and the terror of Huitzilopochtli were no more.

Amidst the ashes and rubble, a new city was to be built. As more Spaniards began to arrive from the West Indies, what is now Mexico City slowly started to take shape. On top of the ruins of the once magnificent temple to Huitzilopochtli, the Spaniards and their newly converted native allies erected the New World's first Christian cathedral. A section of it still stands today as part of Mexico's national cathedral monument. The native peoples flocked to the new religion Cortes had brought them. "Christ brings us salvation and asks no human sacrifice," they proclaimed. And yes, the sun did rise as a new epoch in history dawned. **END**

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Hooded specters offer a sacrifice to the ancient gods in the film, **THE MASK**.

"It has unlocked the secret of the human mind, and has shown me a world deeper than the subconscious. It will change the science of psychiatry forever. This is something that was known thousands of years ago and lost to modern science." So says psychiatrist Dr. Allan Barnes after having placed an ancient Aztec Indian ritual mask over his head in the haunting 1961 film, *The Mask*.

In this chilling little masterpiece made in Toronto, Canada on a shoe-string budget, psychiatrist Barnes receives the mask in the mail from a patient of his, who has subsequently killed himself as a result of the psychotic episodes induced by wearing the mask. The patient, Michael Radin, a young archaeologist from the nearby Museum of Ancient History, stole the mask from the exhibit on Central American Indians. Before killing himself, he told Dr. Barnes that he took the mask because it had beckoned him to do so. He also said that the urge to wear the mask was irresistible, and once worn, it would induce maddening hallucinations and visions. As you witness Radin in the opening scene of the film becoming a psychotic stalker because of these interludes with the mask, one can only wonder what horrific images he must have envisioned.

The writer/director of *The Mask*, Julian Roffman, said he got the idea for the film when he attended a museum exhibit on Aztec artifacts himself. "The medicine men in Aztec rituals would rub peyote inside the masks and run around in a frenzied dance," says Roffman. "The body heat would cause the peyote to be absorbed through the pores of the skin, inducing wild hallucinations. In fact, I modeled the mask we used in the film after an actual mask I saw at the exhibit."

The mask is indeed a frightful sight. Constructed of various-sized tiles, the dominant features are the large, hypnotic eyes and jagged teeth.

Upon opening the package from Radin, Dr. Barnes himself feels the powerful pull of the mask's mystical allure. Enclosed with the mask is a letter from Radin recounting his last des-

perate hours. He urges the skeptical Dr. Barnes to experience the power of the mask himself. "Put the mask on now," is the final sentence of the rambling, delusional letter. We hear this command echoing over and over in Dr. Barnes' mind, until he slowly and hesitantly puts this horrible piece of ancient craftwork over his head.

Suddenly, the screen splits into a 3-D image, and along with Dr. Barnes, we enter a harrowing "half-world" on the edge of human imagination. The true terror for the viewer comes from the anticipation that we are now on the verge of witnessing what drove Radin to madness and ultimately suicide.

Director Roffman wanted the 3-D hallucination scenes to



Dr. Allan Barnes examines the mask.

be something no one had ever seen before in film. He wanted a piece of horrific performance art to be created. For this he recruited several optical and special effects people from Hollywood, cameramen experienced in the 3-D technique from England, and a famed Yugoslavian montage artist, Slavko Vorkapich, to construct the surreal sets. He also hired the renowned French mime, Rudi Linschoten to play Dr. Barnes in the 3-D sequences — an aimless, mask-covered, sleepwalking figure.

"I hired Slavko and Rudi to give the 3-D sequences the quality of a nightmare," says Roffman. "I needed a mime because I wanted those scenes to unfold like some macabre ballet." When the film originally opened in the early '60s, movie-goers were given 3-D glasses that were actually shaped like little masks.

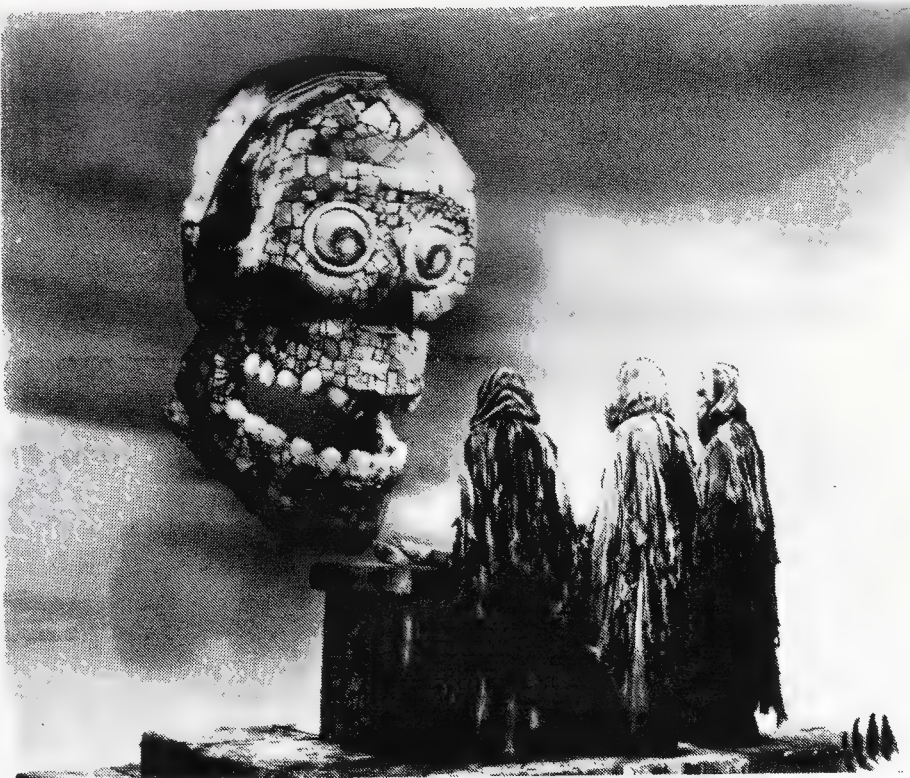
As Dr. Barnes proceeds on his frightening journey into the unknown, he enters a dead world full of unexpected horrors — mad shadows, darting spectres, strange, ancient Aztec-looking monoliths and ruins. Through a forest of dead trees, he sees a floating figure. It turns out to be his secretary Jill Goodrich — but she's somehow different. She's draped in a dark gown and her face is covered by somekind of "deathmask." As Barnes attempts to reach her through the dead underbrush covered with human skulls, his path is blocked by a ghastly demon

who hurls balls of fire at Barnes with his hands. Ms. Goodrich is grabbed by three ghostly, hooded figures and brought to a blood-soaked Aztec sacrificial altar amidst the ruins, where she is offered as a sacrifice to the god of the mask, who looms threateningly overhead. Barnes' attempts to reach her become increasingly frustrated as his way is repeatedly blocked by a maddening barrage of flame, skulls and tumbling geometric forms.

Dr. Barnes awakens from this terrible nightmare world by forcing the mask off his head. At that moment, his fiancée Pamela enters his office to find Dr. Barnes writhing on the floor in a state of mental anguish. He rambles to her incoherently about how he has discovered the "secret of the universe," and how he has discovered the threshold to a world "deeper than the subconscious." His seemingly insane revelations frighten her, and she enlists the help of his colleague, Prof. Quincy, to convince her beloved Allan to cease experimentation with the mask. But like a crazed drug addict craving a fix, Dr. Barnes refuses their help and further indulges the terrible secrets the mask has hidden within its ancient form. Each trip the good doctor takes into this unearthly realm becomes increasingly intense and bizarre... until, like Radin, he becomes a psychopathic madman letting absolutely nothing or no one get in his way. The best part of all, we — as members of the audience — are full participants in viewing the hellish Dante's Inferno Dr. Barnes enters each time he puts on the mask. The 3-D sequences are truly the nightmarish masterpieces Julian Roffman was seeking.

"I based the concept of the nightmare sequences on paintings I've seen by a medieval Belgian artist named Vesalius," recounts Roffman. "He was also an anatomist, so his depictions of the human form were quite graphic."

The Mask is a rare find indeed. Shot in stark black & white, the relatively simple plot belies the film's intelligence. Nowhere will you find a more surreal and terrifying rendition



The mask looms menacingly over the proceedings.

of the mind's ability to imagine the horrific. It leaves you wondering... did Dr. Libby have to go through anything like this? To obtain a superb copy of this film on VHS video, send a check or money-order for \$20 to: Rhino Home Video, 2225 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica, CA. 90404-3555

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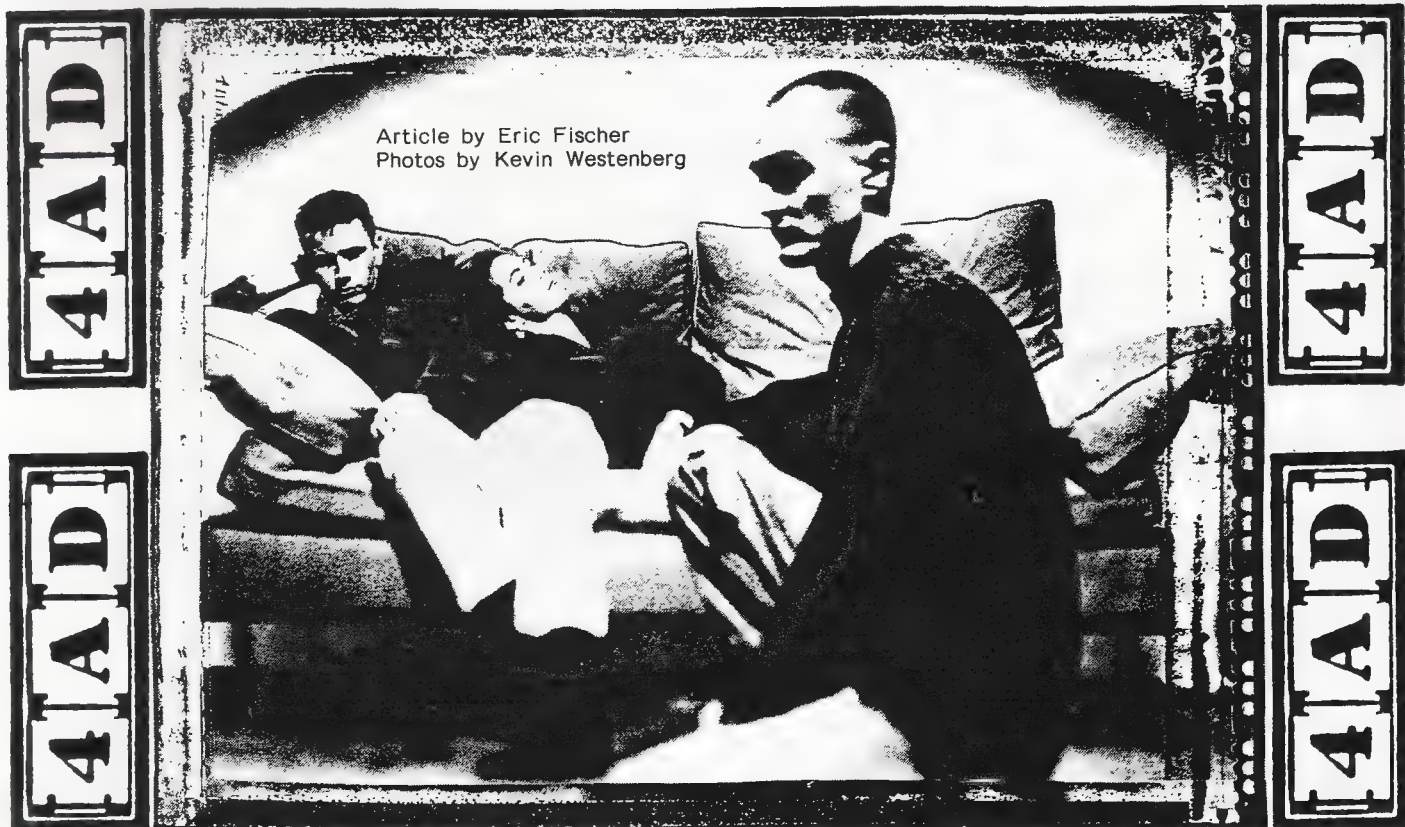
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THE MORTALITY OF *t h i s m o r t a l c o i l*



Article by Eric Fischer
Photos by Kevin Westenberg

Ivo Watts-Russell (right) and two of his helpers, Martin McCarrick and Deirdre Rutkowski.

In a certain sense, you can say that even the name This Mortal Coil had a built-in mortality to it. The collaboration that put out three truly milestone albums and several memorable singles was actually planned to self-destruct.

"The concept had run its course," claims the band's mastermind Ivo Watts-Russell. "It was an exercise in experimentation, an effort to create something totally unclassifiable. That's something that has been missing in music since the progressive underground sounds of the late '60s and early '70s. We achieved that goal with the three Lps, so there was no sense in becoming redundant."

This Mortal Coil was the pet project of England's 4AD label head Ivo Watts-Russell. Though he had few instrumental or engineering skills of his own, he was the undisputed guiding force behind the TMC experiment. Along with writing much of the band's original material, he had the uncanny ability to recruit the most perfectly suited artists for each piece the band produced, and he had the communicative skills to get each person involved to perform the way he wanted them to. This Mortal Coil was a massive collaborative effort using many talented artists from such 4AD bands as the Cocteau Twins, Dead Can Dance, Breeders, the Pixies, etc.

"TMC wasn't just a group, it was an amalgamation of ideas and collaborations," says Ivo, "although I had the ultimate say over what the final product was. If you excluded me from the process, the records would have sounded totally different. I don't say that to sound arrogant — it's just that I was the only one working on This Mortal Coil full-time. Everyone else had their own bands and projects going. To that extent, I was This Mortal Coil. The engineer John Fryer and the string arranger and cellist Martin McCarrick [of Siouxsie and the Banshees] did work on each record, however, and helped bring my ideas to fruition."

When This Mortal Coil released their first single, "Song To The Siren" in 1983 and first Lp, *IT'LL END IN TEARS*, in 1984, many fans and critics alike believed the band to be just a Cocteau Twins alter ego side-project because of Elizabeth Fraser's, Robin Guthrie's and Simon Raymonde's heavy involvement with the recordings. When the second Lp, *FILIGREE AND SHADOW* came out in late '86, Ivo made a greater assertion of his ideas and song material. A more varied lineup of personnel was inserted as well — including Deirdre and Louise Rutkowski of Sunset Gun, vocalist Dominic Appleton of Breathless, and Alison Limerick. TMC had achieved an identity of its own despite the fact that it was never a real band. It was Ivo's genius for organization and arranging that gave it that illusion.

"I'm basically an idea person," explains Ivo. "I like bringing people in from diverse backgrounds and giving them guidelines and projects to handle that they normally wouldn't undertake on their own. I'm not a musician, I'm strictly a one hand, one finger keyboard player. But I think I do a pretty good job conveying musical ideas to others who have the capability to carry these ideas out. One person has to initiate and approve of each idea, however, in a project like this — otherwise things can get disjointed."

On the third TMC Lp, *BLOOD*, which came out the middle of last year, Ivo does a masterful job of directing Kim Deal and Tanya Donnelly of the Breeders to harmonize like angels on the old Chris Bell song, "I Am The Cosmos." He also extracted a vocal masterpiece out of TMC newcomer Caroline Crawley of Shelleyan Orphan for Syd (Pink Floyd) Barrett's melancholy classic "Late Night."

"Caroline's rendition of Syd Barrett's song is probably what I'm most proud of on the new album," beams Ivo. "She never did anything like that before, and it came out so fresh,



Dierdre Rutkowski and Caroline Crawley lend their angelic voices to This Mortal Coil.

so haunting. Her voice has an other-worldly quality about it."

Ivo's love for the dark, melodic songs of '60s psychedelia is quite evident throughout all the TMC releases. All three albums cover various down-beat mood pieces from the Byrds, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, Big Star, etc. Ivo gives them a post-Gothic gloom that truly chills the Rubber Soul. Even the original tunes by the band evoke this fusion of styles.

"The '60s underground sound was music that provoked thought," says Ivo. "I enjoy music that makes you ask questions and evokes an emotional response. Most of all, I enjoy music that evokes sadness. [Some TMC songs can make you misty-eyed even without understanding the lyrics.] It's very important to disappear into the music and to achieve a degree of introspective meditation. I find it to be quite healthy as a matter of fact. I think the music This Mortal Coil produced allowed its fans to share the feeling we put into it."

Whether TMC ever releases another record is entirely dependent on Ivo Watts-Russell. Even if this collaboration never collaborates again, there is enough of their music now available to take many emotional musical voyages. From "Dreams Are Like Water" to "Late Night" to "Come Here My Love," This Mortal Coil has always used broad strokes to paint lavishly dark portraits. Is Ivo hanging up his brushes for good now concerning this particular "blue period" of artistic expression? "I think to continue with This Mortal Coil will only be an exercise in self-indulgence," he says. "After all, this band never had a regular lineup. Anyway, I've basically covered all the songs I enjoyed the most from the past, and have written all the music I think I was capable of with any degree of competency. I'm proud of what TMC accomplished. It was a really satisfying outlet for me, John [Fryer], Martin

[McCarrick] and the others. All good things must pass eventually I guess. I'm sure I'll have other ideas in the future." We are all but temporary passengers on this mortal coil. ■

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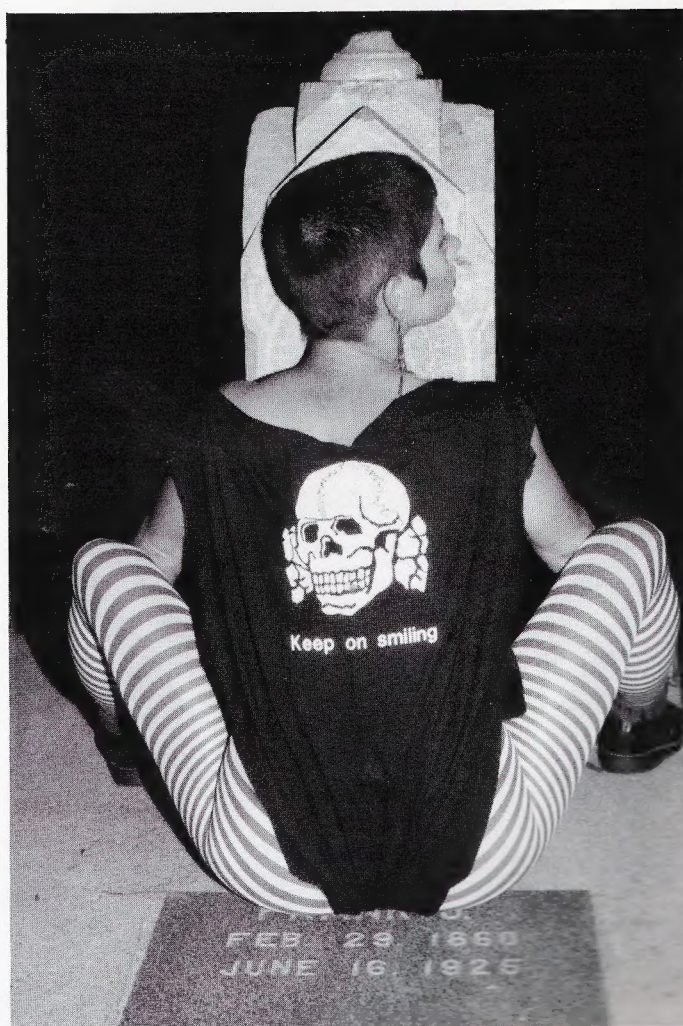
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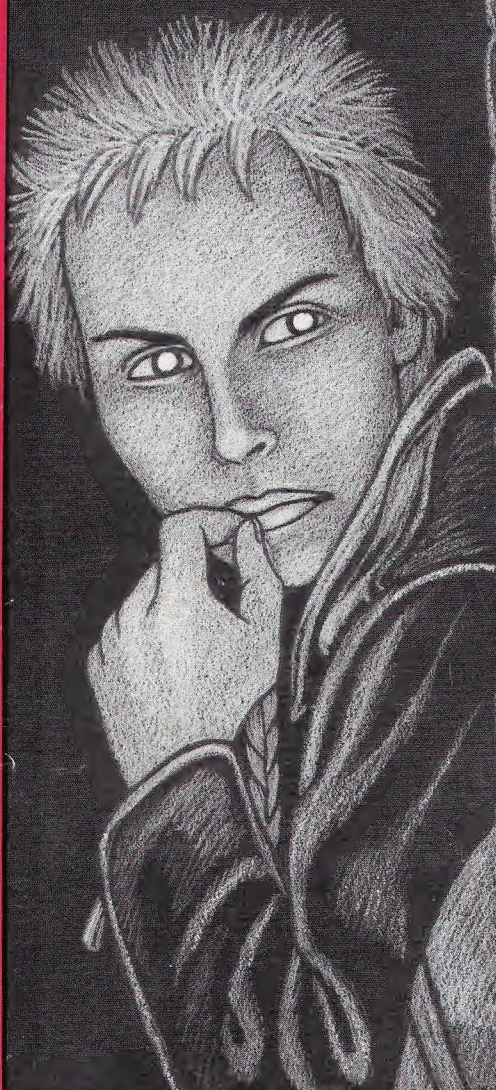
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